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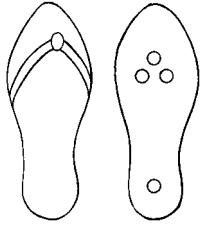
RĀMĀYAṆA
BOOK TWO
AYODHYĀ

BY VALMÍKI

TRANSLATED BY
SHELDON I. POLLOCK



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CONTENTS

Sanskrit alphabetical order 7
CSL conventions 7

RAMÁYANA

Introduction 13

1–6	Rama As Prince Regent	33
7–12	The Boons Of Kaikéyi	69
13–22	Rama Submits	105
23–28	Sita And Lákshmana	159
29–36	Rama Renounces	187
37–42	Ayódhya Grieves	227
43–50	The Hermitage On Mount Chitra·kuta	255
51–58	The End Of Dasha·ratha	301
59–68	Bhárata Returns	345
69–76	Bhárata Refuses The Throne	387
77–87	Bhárata In Pursuit Of Rama	423
88–103	Rama Is Resolved	479
104–107	The Viceroyalty Of Bhárata	571
108–111	Rama Enters The Forest	589

Glossary 613
Index 619
A *sandhi* grid is printed on the inside of the back cover

SANSKRIT ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Vowels:	*a ā i ī u ū ṛ ṝ ḷ ḹ e ai o au ṃ ḥ*
Gutturals:	*k kh g gh ṅ*
Palatals:	*c ch j jh ñ*
Retroflex:	*ṭ ṭh ḍ ḍh ṇ*
Labials:	*p ph b bh m*
Semivowels:	*y r l v*
Spirants:	*ś ṣ s h*

GUIDE TO SANSKRIT PRONUNCIATION

a b*u*t

ā, â r*a*ther

i s*i*t

ī, î f*ee*

u p*u*t

ū,û b*oo*

ṛ vocalic *r*, American p*ur*dy or English p*re*tty

ṝ lengthened *ṛ*

ḷ vocalic *l*, ab*le*

e, ê, ē m*a*de, esp. in Welsh pronunciation

ai b*i*te

o, ô, ō r*o*pe, esp. Welsh pronunciation; Italian s*o*lo

au s*ou*nd

ṃ *anusvāra* nasalizes the preceding vowel

ḥ *visarga*, a voiceless aspiration (resembling English *h*), or like Scottish lo*ch*, or an aspiration with a faint echoing of the preceding vowel so that *taiḥ* is pronounced *taih*^{i}

k lu*ck*

kh blo*ckh*ead

g *g*o

gh bi*gh*ead

ṅ a*n*ger

c *ch*ill

ch mat*chh*ead

j *j*og

jh aspirated *j*, he*dgeh*og

ñ ca*ny*on

ṭ retroflex *t*, *t*ry (with the tip of tongue turned up to touch the hard palate)

ṭh same as the preceding but aspirated

ḍ retroflex *d* (with the tip of tongue turned up to touch the hard palate)

ḍh same as the preceding but aspirated

ṇ retroflex *n* (with the tip of tongue turned up to touch the hard palate)

t	French *t*out	*r*	trilled, resembling the Italian pronunciation of *r*
th	ten*t h*ook	*l*	*l*inger
d	*d*inner	*v*	*w*ord
dh	guil*dh*all	*ś*	*sh*ore
n	*n*ow	*ṣ*	retroflex *sh* (with the tip of the tongue turned up to touch the hard palate)
p	*p*ill	*s*	hi*ss*
ph	u*ph*eaval	*h*	*h*ood
b	*b*efore		
bh	a*bh*orrent		
m	*m*ind		
y	*y*es		

CSL PUNCTUATION OF ENGLISH

The acute accent on Sanskrit words when they occur outside of the Sanskrit text itself, marks stress, e.g. Ramáyana. It is not part of traditional Sanskrit orthography, transliteration or transcription, but we supply it here to guide readers in the pronunciation of these unfamiliar words. Since no Sanskrit word is accented on the last syllable it is not necessary to accent disyllables, e.g. Rama.

The second CSL innovation designed to assist the reader in the pronunciation of lengthy unfamiliar words is to insert an unobtrusive middle dot between semantic word breaks in compound names (provided the word break does not fall on a vowel resulting from the fusion of two vowels), e.g. Maha·bhárata, but Ramáyana (not Rama·áyana). Our dot echoes the punctuating middle dot (·) found in the oldest surviving samples of written Sanskrit, the Ashokan inscriptions of the third century BCE.

The deep layering of Sanskrit narrative has also dictated that we use quotation marks only to announce the beginning and end of every direct speech, and not at the beginning of every paragraph.

CSL PUNCTUATION OF SANSKRIT

The Sanskrit text is also punctuated, in accordance with the punctuation of the English translation. In mid-verse, the punctuation will not alter the *sandhi* or the scansion. Proper names are capitalized, as are

the initial words of verses (or paragraphs in prose texts). Most Sanskrit metres have four "feet" *(pāda):* where possible we print the common *śloka* metre on two lines. The capitalization of verse beginnings makes it easy for the reader to recognize longer metres where it is necessary to print the four metrical feet over four or eight lines. In the Sanskrit text, we use French *Guillemets* (e.g. *«kva saṃcicīrṣuḥ?»*) instead of English quotation marks (e.g. "Where are you off to?") to avoid confusion with the apostrophes used for vowel elision in *sandhi*.

Sanskrit presents the learner with a challenge: *sandhi* ("euphonic combination"). *Sandhi* means that when two words are joined in connected speech or writing (which in Sanskrit reflects speech), the last letter (or even letters) of the first word often changes; compare the way we pronounce "the" in "the beginning" and "the end."

In Sanskrit the first letter of the second word may also change; and if both the last letter of the first word and the first letter of the second are vowels, they may fuse. This has a parallel in English: a nasal consonant is inserted between two vowels that would otherwise coalesce: "a pear" and "an apple." Sanskrit vowel fusion may produce ambiguity. The chart at the back of each book gives the full *sandhi* system.

Fortunately it is not necessary to know these changes in order to start reading Sanskrit. For that, what is important is to know the form of the second word without *sandhi* (pre-*sandhi*), so that it can be recognized or looked up in a dictionary. Therefore we are printing Sanskrit with a system of punctuation that will indicate, unambiguously, the original form of the second word, i.e., the form without *sandhi*. Such *sandhi* mostly concerns the fusion of two vowels.

In Sanskrit, vowels may be short or long and are written differently accordingly. We follow the general convention that a vowel with no mark above it is short. Other books mark a long vowel either with a bar called a macron (*ā*) or with a circumflex (*â*). Our system uses the macron, except that for initial vowels in *sandhi* we use a circumflex to indicate that originally the vowel was short, or the shorter of two possibilities (*e* rather than *ai*, *o* rather than *au*).

When we print initial *â*, before *sandhi* that vowel was *a*

î or *ê*,	*i*
û or *ô*,	*u*

âi,	*e*
âu,	*o*
ā,	*ā* (i.e., the same)
ī,	*ī* (i.e., the same)
ū,	*ū* (i.e., the same)
ē,	*ī*
ō,	*ū*
āi,	*ai*
āu,	*au*

', before *sandhi* there was a vowel *a*

FURTHER HELP WITH VOWEL SANDHI

When a final short vowel (*a*, *i* or *u*) has merged into a following vowel, we print *'* at the end of the word, and when a final long vowel (*ā*, *ī* or *ū*) has merged into a following vowel we print *"* at the end of the word. The vast majority of these cases will concern a final *a* or *ā*.

Examples:

What before *sandhi* was *atra asti* is represented as *atr' âsti*

atra āste	*atr' āste*
kanyā asti	*kany" âsti*
kanyā āste	*kany" āste*
atra iti	*atr' êti*
kanyā iti	*kany" êti*
kanyā īpsitā	*kany" ēpsitā*

Finally, three other points concerning the initial letter of the second word:

(1) A word that before *sandhi* begins with *ṛ* (vowel), after *sandhi* begins with *r* followed by a consonant: *yatha" rtu* represents pre-*sandhi yathā ṛtu*.

(2) When before *sandhi* the previous word ends in *t* and the following word begins with *ś*, after *sandhi* the last letter of the previous word is *c* and the following word begins with *ch*: *syāc chāstravit* represents pre-*sandhi syāt śāstravit*.

(3) Where a word begins with *h* and the previous word ends with a double consonant, this is our simplified spelling to show the pre-*sandhi* form: *tad hasati* is commonly written as *tad dhasati*, but we write *tadd hasati* so that the original initial letter is obvious.

COMPOUNDS

We also punctuate the division of compounds (*samāsa*), simply by inserting a thin vertical line between words. There are words where the decision whether to regard them as compounds is arbitrary. Our principle has been to try to guide readers to the correct dictionary entries.

EXAMPLE

Where the Deva·nágari script reads:

कुम्भस्थली रक्षतु वो विकीर्णसिन्दूररेरणुर्द्विरदाननस्य।
प्रशान्तये विघ्नतमश्छटानां निष्ठ्यूतबालातपपल्लवेव॥

Others would print:

kumbhasthalī rakṣatu vo vikīrṇasindūrareṇur dviradānanasya /
praśāntaye vighnatamaśchaṭānāṃ niṣṭhyūtabālātapapallaveva //

We print:

Kumbha|sthalī rakṣatu vo vikīrṇa|sindūra|reṇur dvirad'|ānanasya
praśāntaye vighna|tamaś|chaṭānāṃ niṣṭhyūta|bāl'|ātapa|pallav" êva.

And in English:

"May Ganésha's domed forehead protect you! Streaked with vermilion dust, it seems to be emitting the spreading rays of the rising sun to pacify the teeming darkness of obstructions."

"Nava·sáhasanka and the Serpent Princess" I.3 by Padma·gupta

INTRODUCTION

Theirs are exploits the world will keep alive in memory forever. "Ayódhya" 54.18

Although one can no longer claim with the confidence of previous scholars that in its "original" form the "Ramáyana" began with "Ayódhya" (the *Ayodhyā/kāṇḍa*), nonetheless, the main narrative of the poem commences in this book. The name of Ayódhya, the capital city of the ancient state of Kósala in east-central India, is an apposite choice for title. For in contrast to the other four central books of the epic, where the action takes place in the unpeopled wilderness, the land of the monkeys, and the island fortress of the demons *(rākṣasa)*, here the center of interest is the city, where social life reaches its greatest degree of complexity and intensity.

It was probably not much earlier than the seventh century BCE that the major urban centers of aryan India came into existence, and yet during the composition of the "Ramáyana" in pre-Mauryan times the city had already become the literary focal point of civilized life. The epic poets were primarily concerned with life as played out in the city. Their interest embraced both social life—especially the family with its inherent tensions, the responsibilites it imposes on the individual, and often the conflicting allegiances it exacts—and political life, the "state," and the powers of the state, which appeared in their most tangible manifestations in the city. Moreover, as we shall see in "The Forest" ("Ramáyana" Book Three, the *Araṇya/kāṇḍa*), they regarded the "desolate forest" as a zone of mystery, where supernatural forces came

into play, yet where a certain Edenic quality had been preserved.

The contrast—at times tension—between the city and the forest, which was increasingly to command the attention of the urban poet, becomes palpable, perhaps for the first time in Indian history, here in "Ayódhya." It is with an unmistakable sense of liberation that Rama will find himself banished from Ayódhya and its troubles. This attitude seems to be symptomatic of a new urban malaise. But this opposition remains secondary in the present book. For the most part, Valmíki directs our attention to the city and its central concerns. And if in the subsequent books the scene shfts beyond the human social order and the issues raised here become attentuated, they remain the fundamental ones for Valmíki.

If Homer, for example, addresses a transcendent problem, showing us what makes life finally impossible, Valmíki poses the more difficult question: What is it that makes life possible? This is more difficult because it is a social, not a cosmic question. And the answer raises additional questions: it is behavior in accordance with *dharma*, "righteousness," that alone makes life possible. But what exactly does "righteousness" mean? What are the kinds and limits of the obligations it imposes? Who is placed under these obligations, and to whom and how are they to be discharged?

Brief Synopsis

While Bhárata, the king's second eldest son, is away in the land of Kékaya, King Dasha·ratha decides to consecrate his eldest son Rama as prince regent. Bhárata's mother, Kaikéyi,

learns of the news from her hunchback servant, Mántha-ra, who persuades her that the coronation poses a serious threat to her son. By means of two boons which Dasha·ratha had granted her long ago, Kaikéyi forces the king to agree to her own son's succession and Rama's banishment to the wilderness for fourteen years.

When Kaikéyi tells Rama of these demands, he agrees unhesitatingly, assuring her that he will depart the same day. Kausálya and Lákshmana, Rama's mother and youngest brother respectively, attempt to dissuade Rama from obeying Kaikéyi, but he stands firm in his resolve.

Rama is persuaded by his wife, Sita, to take her along to the forest, and he also grants Lákshmana permission to accompany him into exile.

Dressing in the barkcloth garments of an ascetic, Rama takes leave of his parents and sets out amid the lamentation of the inhabitants of the city. Crossing the river Ganges, he establishes his hermitage on Mount Chitra·kuta.

Meanwhile, from the depths of his misery in Ayódhya, Dasha·ratha recovers the memory of something that had happened in his youth. He had accidentally killed a young ascetic, and the boy's father, a sage, had laid a curse on him that he too would end his days in grief for a son. A little after midnight on that, the sixth night of Rama's exile, Dasha·ratha dies.

Ministers dispatch envoys to fetch Bhárata from Kékaya in order to perform Dasha·ratha's funeral rites and install him as king. Bhárata returns and learns to his horror of his mother's crimes. Refusing the kingship that is pressed upon

him, Bhárata vows to bring Rama back from the forest and departs for Chitra·kuta with a vast army.

At the hermitage, Bhárata repeatedly tries to persuade Rama to return, but to no avail: Rama is resolved to keep his father's promise and his own. He consents only to give his slippers to Bhárata to display in token of his kingship. Bhárata returns home and begins the period of his viceroyalty from the neighbouring village of Nandi·grama. At the end of the book, Rama leaves Chitra·kuta with his brother and wife and enters the wilderness of Dándaka.

The Central Issues

Indian epics are interested in a wide range of issues. In the course of their transmission a congeries of topics—mythological, philosophical, religious, and so on—was incorporated into them. Nevertheless, an integral theme of Sanskrit epic literature is kingship itself and its attendant problems: the acquisition, maintenance, and execution of royal power, the legitimacy of succession, and the predicament of transferring hereditary power within a royal dynasty. One explanation for why the problems of kingship were so insistently addressed by the epic texts may be the fact that they were new problems and, in their very nature, urgent.

During the three or four hundred years following the middle vedic age (c. 800 BCE), a critical period of dynamic transition, fundamental and enduring changes came about in the Indian way of life. Besides the growth of cities like Ayódhya and the rise of politically discrete polities like Kósala, the most important social development seems to

have been a far more markedly defined hierarchical ordering of society. A second change concerns the extraordinary expansion of the role of the king. The nature of monarchy in this period appears unlike anything existing earlier. As the "Ramáyana" represents it, economic, social, political, and cultural welfare was now felt to depend exclusively on the king. For the first time, moreover, it became the conventional practice to transfer kingship through heredity.

Several consequences of hereditary monarchy are continually thrust upon our attention by their central position in the story of "Ayódhya." One such feature is the *yauva/rājya*, "prince regency," whereby the reigning king appoints his successor (as Dasha·ratha intends to appoint Rama). Another feature is intertribal—or what is now really interstate—marriage. Closely related to this is the politically significant practice of *rājya/śulka*, "the bride price consisting of the kingship (or kingdom)," which Dasha·ratha has offered to the king of Kékaya.

Moreover, the new restricted control of political power entailed a heightened competition attending its transfer. The antinomies involved in hereditary monarchical succession posed the constant threat of the sharpest possible intensification of the process: divisive and usually violent dynastic struggle.

Sanskrit epics were composed by more or less professional poets for the politically dominant group, the kshatriyas. Although the "Ramáyana" was also performed "on the streets and royal highways" of Ayódhya ("The Final Chapter," "Ramáyana" Book 7, the *Uttara/kāṇḍa* 84.4), a popular function it has preserved to the present day, its primary and deter-

minate audience was composed of kshatriyas. The issues addressed by the epic were those central to the lives of the kshatriyas who patronized it.

Thus, Valmíki, like his predecessors and contemporaries, was restricted to a particular set of themes. But when we compare the "Ramáyana" with other examples of epic literature, it seems evident that Valmíki found the previous treatments deficient not only aesthetically but ethically as well.

As the "Maha·bhárata" makes clear, the early epic tradition had acknowledged, if sometimes reluctantly, only one means for the resolution of political and dynastic conflict: armed combat. In the "Maha·bhárata" the dispute of two claimants for the succession to the Kuru throne is resolved only by a cataclysmic struggle that spirals out to engulf the entire Indian world.

For Valmíki, on the other hand, violence becomes, quite literally, the strategy of the inhuman. In Book Four, among the monkey princes in Kishkíndha, force is explicitly promoted as the only correct means of dealing with infringements of righteousness. In the sixth book, in Lanka, once more, the struggle for political power among brother demons is settled by the sword.

These incidents establish instructive parallels with the events of "Ayódhya." Bhárata too has the chance to displace his elder brother, Rama, in dynastic succession, while Rama himself is dispossessed and driven from his country through a tyrant's unrighteous conduct. But the naked violence and unscrupulous political opportunism we encounter in Kishkíndha and Lanka are rigorously excluded from the city of Ayódhya. For civilized society the poet in-

culcates, by positive precept and negative example, and with a sometimes numbing insistence, a powerful new code of conduct: hierarchically ordered, unqualified submission.

Everyone in "Ayódhya" expects Bhárata to mount a struggle for power. This was the established pattern of behavior, and the "Maha·bhárata" narrates in full the tragic consequences of this principle, which historical kings throughout the period—the young Ashóka, for example—tried to forestall by the summary execution of virtually all possible claimants, elder brothers among them. For Valmíki such struggle must be averted at all costs. The way to obviate this deadly antagonism is by the doctrine of unconditional submission of the younger to the elder brother.

The "Maha·bhárata" is no doubt sensitive to the desperate dilemma of living made possible only through killing. But its interrogations are indecisive; it can conceive of no solution except the final one in heaven. Valmíki altogether inverts the priorities both literature and history had valorized, asking incredulously:

> *How, after all, could a son kill his father, whatever the extremity, or a brother his brother, Sáumitri, his very own breath of life?* "Ayódhya" 91.6

The code of behavior Valmíki prescribes in this context has a practical as well as an ethical dimension. If hereditary power could not be transferred smoothly, the consequences could be disastrous. In addition to this practical vocation, the ethics represents a new and hopeful humanism in the realm of political behavior. Violence is brutality in the rad-

ical sense of the world, and belongs to the subhuman world of monkeys and demons.

Yet the poem itself urges us to penetrate the surface discourse to another set of references embedded in it. By both its explicit injunctions and the implications of its structure, "Ayódhya" invites and, in fact, has always been subject to wide social extension. "One must behave like Rama" is the later proverbial formulation. For Rama represents a comprehensive model of behavior, enacting in particular two roles that encompass communal life in its totality.

The first role is Rama's absolute heteronomy. The status of junior members of the Indian household was, historically, not very dissimilar to that of slaves, both with respect to the father and, again, hierarchically among themselves. As Lákshmana and Bhárata submit to Rama, and as Rama himself submits and suffers, so all the orders of society are to recognize and observe the strict boundaries of hierarchical existence. Rama's behavior is a paradigm to which all subordinates must conform.

On a second, socially symbolic level, Rama's filial relationship with the king is brought into prominence. According to the paternalistic formulation of the text, the people are the *prajāḥ,* the "children," of the king.

The institutionalization of dependency and loyalty would appear to be a major precondition for the centralization of power. The king comes to represent a superior kinship bond, drawing on and incorporating the symbolic power of those that had previously been dominant.

Aesthetic And Literary-Historical Considerations

When we speak of "Valmíki," we are using the name as a convenient, shorthand way of referring to the composer of the monumental "Ramáyana." But we should bear in mind that this text continued to be amplified even after Valmíki fixed the essential contours of the work; similarly, the monumental poem was itself not the beginning of the tradition, but a major synthesis of antecedent elements.

However, although the "Ramáyana" must represent the culmination of a long bardic tradition of heroic song, and although the monumental poet must have adopted certain motifs from folk literature as we find it represented, for example, in the Buddhist játakas, the poem is more easily considered as the first chapter in a new volume of Indian literary history than as the last of an old one.

The reader who comes to "Ayódhya" with an awareness of the literary character of late vedic myth and legend, the játakas, or other early Pali or Sanskrit Buddhist narratives, or of the central portions of the "Maha·bhárata," must be struck by the sophisticated artistry of the book, which nothing in the antecedent or contemporary literature had prepared him to expect.

Valmíki's versification unquestionably possesses a polish and grace that markedly differentiates it from anything known before. "Lyric" verses at the ends of cantos, for example, are designed to mark closure, either by recapitulating the action or by providing a synoptic preview of what is to come. There is no analogy for this device that I know of in early Indian literature. Furthermore, if the balladlike refrain style to which Valmíki is especially partial in "Ayó-

dhya" has antecedents in the folk tradition, nowhere else do we find it employed with the same fine sense of proportion and restraint; and it is used only when there is compelling contextual motivation for the tone of pathos that it contributes.

Unlike much early Sankrit epic poetry, and oral epic in general, with its subordination of the line to the paragraph, the paragraph to the book, and the book to the whole, Valmíki is particularly interested in sculpting the memorable individual line, often by the use of almost classical rhetorical devices. The listener or reader is asked to pause and relish, as he had often not been asked before.

Perhaps the most impressive formal feature, and the most sophisticated aesthetic advance, is the construction of the book. "Ayódhya" is probably the most skillfully structured of the seven sections of the poem; the links of the plot are securely and tightly concatenated. Our sight is never allowed to wander as the story progresses toward the final conflict and resolution. And the progress has an implacable quality to it, marked by the stirring and at times vehement and bitter encounters between the principal characters, by sudden and compelling reversals, and the stimulation and frustration of our expectations.

Beyond the mere linear development of the action, we can discern two other narrative modes that function as formal correlatives to the major problematic of the story. The first is distinguished by its spatial continuity, the second by its temporal synchrony.

The narrative time span for approximately the first two-thirds of the book is extremely brief. The action of cantos

1–40 (1–4 and 7–12 excepted) occurs in a single day; 1–63 together occupy only ten days. Rama's departure produces a long ache rather than a single sharp pain. With so much of the story occupying so limited a temporal framework, we find a lingering, minute, examination of what action there is from multiple perspectives. Diachronic narration, interweaving the separate strands of the narrative, starts in canto 13, but soon a spatial discontinuity sets in. With Rama's departure from the city in canto 35, the narrative focus begins to alternate frequently: to Ayódhya (36–39), to Rama (40–41), to Ayódhya (42), back to Rama (43–50), to Ayódhya (51–87), to Rama (88–91), to Bhárata (92).

Rama's fate is not his alone; his family as well as the entire community are involved in it. From the hero's banishment result dilemmas of every sort—social, political, ethical. We witness each successive predicament as it is individually addressed. At the same time, the central importance of Rama is continually underscored, and, his response juxtaposed to those of the other characters, distinguishing its uniqueness.

A rather more subtle narrative procedure is discernible in the synchronous mode. Here the narrative does not move directly forward but retraces itself to examine the same narrative time frame from two different vantage points. An expressive example occurs in cantos 50–58. In canto 50 Rama reaches the grove of asceticism and settles down to his life in exile. At that very hour, back in Ayódhya, Dasha·ratha recovers at last the memory of the evil deed of his youth: long ago he had slain a young ascetic and had been cursed by the boy's father. Now blind and feeble and as good as childless, Dasha·ratha is reduced to a condition identical to

that of the seer he bereaved, while Rama, the son whom Kausálya accuses her husband of having destroyed, has at the same moment been transformed into an ascetic of the sort Dasha·ratha murdered.

The synchronicity of the narrative here helps to make manifest a complex and richly suggestive set of latent correspondences. One further effect it has is to reinforce a dominant theme: the role of fate.

The Philosophy

It has long been recognized that fate plays a central role in much epic poetry, but considerable variation can be discerned among the different traditions. Achilles may be doomed to choose between a short life of heroic glory and a long but obscure existence; nevertheless, the choice is his and he knows it. The characters of the "Ramáyana" believe themselves to be denied all freedom of choice; what happens to them may be the result of "their" own doing, but they do not understand how this is so and consequently can exercise no control. This essential difference implies another, equally weighty.

Since the Greek hero in large measure makes and is aware of making his own fate, fate carries with it a substantial element of justice. The fate of Rama and others is prepared for them, at some plane beyond their intervention or even comprehension. "Justice" never enters the picture. Further, since in the archaic Greek world fate has both a cosmic dimension and an aspect of justice, the gods can guarantee the whole process as guardians of a just and moral order. Sig-

nificantly, gods play no role whatever in "Ayódhya." There is a mechanical quality to the course of human affairs.

In the *Ayodhyā/kāṇḍa* man is prohibited from making his destiny, and cannot truly comprehend the cause of his suffering. Fate—*daiva,* "what comes from the gods;" *kāla,* "time;" *adṛṣṭa,* "the unforeseeable;" *kṛtānta,* "doom" or "destiny"—is something one cannot understand and against which one cannot struggle. Rama has no choice; no one does. Choice is replaced by chance, and action is nothing more than reaction.

The doubts and hesitations in the face of so paralyzing an axiom are not, however, suppressed; Lákshmana throughout much of the epic and the minister Jabáli in canto 100 of "Ayódhya" urge the antithetical position: reliance on *puruṣa/kāra,* "human effort," "free will." But these characters are only foils, supplying a pretext for Rama to advance his uncompromising position. His own convictions are never affected.

This fatalism also takes on, in the recurrent appeal to *karma*, a more specific shape. Though the word *karma* seems not to be used in so technical a sense in the "Ramáyana," the belief is clearly present that there exists a latent and unfailing mechanism of retributive justice for transgressions committed in the past, usually in a former life. No other explanation is ever available to the characters in the midst of their suffering.

The cause of sorrow is hidden in a vast obscurity that effectively renders hopeless any attempt to remedy it—or to have prevented it. Only once is the connection ever perceived (by Dasha·ratha, sargas 57–58) between a specific

deed and its grievous consequences, which might serve to explain or justify suffering. But Dasha·ratha's deed was accidental; the inscrutability of retribution is only intensified.

The Characters

If the style and narrative organization of "Ayódhya" often show great and easily accessible artistry, it may be more difficult for the modern reader to evaluate the quality of characterization. Two distinct groups of characters seem to present themselves: those, on the one hand, who possess the uneven contours of imperfect human beings, depths where we can hear the cacophonous resonances of familiar emotions and the many tones of moral uncertainty; and those, on the other hand, who are more regular and flat, with almost emblematic features.

Dasha·ratha, Kaikéyi, and Kausálya have a natural unevenness. They command full and complex emotional and moral registers. Choices confront them with which they must grapple; they suffer and in their suffering engage in a painful and very human process of self-recognition. Yet we perceive this only if we search for it; the culmination of these processes is rarely allowed into the foreground of the narrative.

Valmíki is uninterested in these contingent characters. The poet's indifference is, of course, partly a result of the fact that Rama and those who directly participate in his sacrifice—Lákshmana, Sita, and Bhárata—are the principal focus of his attention. But Valmíki's unconcern has some other origin, which will become apparent if we examine the characterization of the second set.

The reader will probably be struck, despite the driving momentum of the action, by a feeling of stasis in these four characters. They do not grow or change in the course of the narrative, or develop through inner struggle in the presence of moral choice. Unlike Kaikéyi or Dasha·ratha, they define themselves in relation to others with an immutable and unnatural consistency.

Rama and the others are evidently designed to be monovalent paradigms of conduct. Valmíki has not only an aesthetic intention but also a didactic purpose. The specific dimension of each of these four moral great figures is encapsulated in a formulaic, often alliterative, epithet, which augments the impression of stasis. Rama is the "champion of righteousness" *(dharma/bhṛtāṃ varaḥ)*; Bhárata "a man of brotherly love" *(bhrātṛ/vatsalaḥ)*; Lákshmana "marked with goodness" *(śubha/lakṣaṇaḥ)* in devotedly serving his elder brother; Sita is "like the daughter of the gods" *(sura/sut"/ôpamā),* by reason of both her beauty and the virtue (that is, unwavering fidelity to her husband) that in Indian culture beauty is so often said to reflect.

The two sets of characters thus serve very different literary functions. The four central ones embody permanent moral values in a society marked by generalized contigency. The others (and this is the only sort known to the poets of the central portion of the "Maha·bhárata") typify precisely that uncertainty, hesitancy, and vacillation. We may find it hard to respond to the former, since they will necessarily lack moral variety. But we must remember that if they do not manifest a recognizable human complexity it is because they were never intended to do so; Rama's "true feelings" will

remain secret, and properly so, for they are quite irrelevant to the poem's purposes. The didactic exigencies of the work required perfect moral types, and perfection, by definition, does not alter.

The Text, Annotations, And Translation

The critical edition of Valmíki's "Ramáyana," upon which this translation is based, is occasionally subject to question. Thus, when I found myself in serious disagreement with the editor, I emended and translated as I thought necessary. All departures from the constituted text are listed in an appendix to the translation (and explained in the notes published separately on the CSL website).

I have kept before me all the medieval commentaries on the *Ayodhyā/kāṇḍa* that are available in print. My admiration for the learning and perspicacity of the commentators is as great as my indebtedness to them. Many of the verses owe their English shape directly to the exegetical labors of these scholiasts.

All translators acutely feel the obligation of not disappointing their author. Valmíki has substantial elements of genius, and I have striven to discharge the duty his genius imposes. "Ayódhya" is roughly two-thirds the size of the *Odyssey,* and there is bound to be a certain amount of chaff in it. It is in large part an oral composition; the repetitions of formula and epithet are as essential to it as any other literary or narrative feature; these can no longer simply be thrown overboard at the whim of the translator. It is a heroic epic, too, and for that sort of literature a truly appropriate diction is no longer available. The contemporary

translator of the Greek epic has behind him some four hundred years of attempts at producing an English Homer. The Sanskritist works in a tradition both much more recent and less useful, and cannot safely assume that a single problem, whether philological or literary, has already been solved. He must start from the ground up—in fact from the very word *dharma*—and the only reasonable hope he may entertain is to have cleared some of the ground satisfactorily.

The preceding is a highly condensed version of Sheldon I. Pollock's original introduction to his Princeton translation of "Ayódhya" (pp. 3–76) to which the interested reader is referred for an in-depth analysis of the work. To read the full introduction, extensive annotation, and bibliography of works consulted, please visit the CSL website.

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1–6
RAMA AS PRINCE REGENT

1.1 KASYA CIT TV ATHA Kālasya rājā Daśarathaḥ sutam
Bharataṃ Kekayī|putram abravīd Raghu|nandanaḥ:
«Ayaṃ Kekaya|rājasya putro vasati putraka
tvāṃ netum āgato vīra Yudhājin mātulas tava.»
Śrutvā Daśarathasy' âitad Bharataḥ Kekayī|sutaḥ
gamanāy' âbhicakrāma Śatrughna|sahitas tadā.
Āpṛcchya pitaraṃ śūro Rāmaṃ c' âkliṣṭa|kāriṇam
mātṝṃś c' âpi nara|śreṣṭhaḥ Śatrughna|sahito yayau.
1.5 Yudhājit prāpya Bharataṃ sa|Śatrughnaṃ praharṣitaḥ
sva|puraṃ prāviśad vīraḥ pitā tasya tutoṣa ha.
Sa tatra nyavasad bhrātrā saha sat|kāra|sat|kṛtaḥ
mātulen' Âśvapatinā putra|snehena lālitaḥ.
Tatr' âpi nivasantau tau tarpyamāṇau ca kāmataḥ
bhrātarau smaratāṃ vīrau vṛddhaṃ Daśarathaṃ nṛpam.
Rāj" âpi tau mahā|tejāḥ sasmāra proṣitau sutau
ubhau Bharata|Śatrughnau Mah"|êndra|Varuṇ'|ôpamau.
Sarva eva tu tasy' êṣṭāś catvāraḥ puruṣa|ṛṣabhāḥ
sva|śarīrād vinirvṛttāś catvāra iva bāhavaḥ.
1.10 Teṣām api mahā|tejā Rāmo rati|karaḥ pituḥ
svayam|bhūr iva bhūtānāṃ babhūva guṇavattaraḥ.
Gate ca Bharate Rāmo Lakṣmaṇaś ca mahā|balaḥ
pitaraṃ deva|saṃkāśaṃ pūjayām āsatus tadā.
Pitur ājñāṃ puraskṛtya paura|kāryāṇi sarvaśaḥ
cakāra Rāmo dharm'|ātmā priyāṇi ca hitāni ca.
Mātṛbhyo mātṛ|kāryāṇi kṛtvā param ayantritaḥ
gurūṇāṃ guru|kāryāṇi kāle kāle 'nvavaikṣata.

Time passed and then one day King Dasha·ratha, the 1.1
delight of the Raghus, spoke to Bhárata, his son by Kaikéyi: "My mighty son, your mother's brother Yudhájit, the son of the king of Kékaya, has come and is waiting to take you back home with him." When he had heard what Dasha·ratha told him, Kaikéyi's son Bhárata prepared to depart with Shatrúghna. Taking leave of his father, of tireless Rama and of his mothers, the hero, the best of men, went off with Shatrúghna. Delighted to have Bhárata and Sha- 1.5
trúghna with him, mighty Yudhájit returned to his native city, to the great satisfaction of his father. There Bhárata lived with his brother, enjoying the warm hospitality of his uncle Ashva·pati, who showered him with all the affection one shows a son. And yet, as the mighty brothers stayed on, their every desire satisfied, they often thought with longing of aged King Dasha·ratha.

The great king likewise often thought of his two absent sons, Bhárata and Shatrúghna, the equals of great Indra and Váruna. For he cherished every one of the four bulls among men, as if they were four arms extending from his body. But still, of all of them, it was mighty Rama who brought 2.10
his father the greatest joy. For he surpassed his brothers in virtue just as the self-existent Brahma surpasses all other beings. In Bhárata's absence Rama and powerful Lákshmana showed reverence to their godlike father. Following his father's orders, righteous Rama did all that was required to please and benefit the people of the city. He scrupulously did all that his mothers required of him and attended to his

Evaṃ Daśarathaḥ prīto brāhmaṇā naigamās tathā
Rāmasya śīla|vṛttena sarve viṣaya|vāsinaḥ.
Sa hi nityaṃ praśānt'|ātmā mṛdu|pūrvaṃ ca bhāṣate
ucyamāno 'pi paruṣaṃ n' ôttaraṃ pratipadyate
Kathaṃ cid upakāreṇa kṛten' âikena tuṣyati
na smaraty apakārāṇāṃ śatam apy ātmavattayā
Śīla|vṛddhair jñāna|vṛddhair vayo|vṛddhaiś ca saj|janaiḥ
kathayann āsta vai nityam astra|yogy'|āntareṣv api
Kalyāṇ'|âbhijanaḥ sādhur adīnaḥ satya|vāg ṛjuḥ
vṛddhair abhivinītaś ca dvijair dharm'|ârtha|darśibhiḥ
Dharm'|ârtha|kāma|tattvajñaḥ smṛtimān pratibhāvanān
laukike samay'|ācare kṛta|kalpo viśāradaḥ
Śāstrajñaś ca kṛtajñaś ca puruṣ'|āntara|kovidaḥ
yaḥ pragraha|nigrahayor yathā|nyāyaṃ vicakṣaṇaḥ
Āya|karmaṇy upāyajñaḥ saṃdṛṣṭa|vyaya|karmavit
śraiṣṭhyaṃ śāstra|samūheṣu prāpto vyāmiśrakeṣv api
Artha|dharmau ca saṃgṛhya sukha|tantro na c' ālasaḥ.
vaihārikāṇāṃ śilpānāṃ vijñāt" ârtha|vibhāgavit.
Ārohe vinaye c' âiva yukto vāraṇa|vājinām
dhanur|vedavidāṃ śreṣṭho loke 'tiratha|saṃmataḥ.
Abhiyātā prahartā ca senā|naya|viśāradaḥ.
apradhṛṣyaś ca saṃgrāme kruddhair api sur'|âsuraiḥ.

gurus' requirements with strict punctuality. Thus Dasha·ratha was pleased with Rama's conduct and character, as were the *brahmans*, the merchants and all who lived in the realm.

Rama was always even-tempered and kind-spoken. Even 1.15
if he were to be harshly addressed, he would not answer back. He would be satisfied with a single act of kindness, whatever its motive, and would ignore a hundred injuries, so great was his self-control. With good men—men advanced in years, virtue and wisdom—he would converse at every opportunity, even during breaks in his weapons practice. He was of noble descent on both sides of his family, he was upright and cheerful, truthful and honest. Aged *brahmans* had seen to his training, men who were wise in the ways of righteousness and statecraft. And thus he understood the true nature of righteousness, statecraft and personal pleasure. He was retentive and insightful, knowledgeable and
adept in the social proprieties. He was learned in the sci- 1.20
ences and skilled in the practice of them as well. He was an excellent judge of men and could tell when it was appropriate to show his favor or withhold it. He knew the right means for collecting revenue and the accepted way of regulating expenditure. He had achieved preeminence in the sum total of the sciences, even the most complex.

Only after satisfying the claims of righteousness and statecraft would he give himself up to pleasure, and then never immoderately. He was a connoisseur of the fine arts and understood all aspects of political life. He was proficient in training and riding horses and elephants, eminently knowledgeable in the science of weapons, and esteemed throughout the world as a master chariot fighter. He could head a

An|asūyo jita|krodho na dṛpto na ca matsarī.
na c' âvamantā bhūtānāṃ na ca kāla|vaś'|ânugaḥ.
Evaṃ śraiṣṭhair guṇair yuktaḥ prajānāṃ pārthiv'|ātmajaḥ
saṃmatas triṣu lokeṣu vasudhāyāḥ kṣamā|guṇaiḥ
buddhyā Bṛhaspates tulyo vīryeṇ' âpi Śacī|pateḥ.
Tathā sarva|prajā|kāntaiḥ prīti|saṃjananaiḥ pituḥ
guṇair viruruce Rāmo dīptaḥ sūrya iv' âṃśubhiḥ.
Tam evaṃ|vṛtta|saṃpannam apradhṛṣya|parākramam
loka|pāl'|ôpamaṃ nātham akāmayata medinī.

Etais tu bahubhir yuktaṃ guṇair anupamaiḥ sutam
dṛṣṭvā Daśaratho rājā cakre cintāṃ paraṃ|tapaḥ.
Eṣā hy asya parā prītir hṛdi saṃparivartate:
«kadā nāma sutaṃ drakṣyāmy abhiṣiktam ahaṃ priyam?
Vṛddhi|kāmo hi lokasya sarva|bhūt'|ânukampanaḥ
mattaḥ priyataro loke parjanya iva vṛṣṭimān.
Yama|Śakra|samo vīrye Bṛhaspati|samo matau
Mahī|dhara|samo dhṛtyāṃ mattaś ca guṇavattaraḥ.
Mahīm aham imāṃ kṛtsnām adhitiṣṭhantam ātmajam
anena vayasā dṛṣṭvā yathā svargam avāpnuyām.»

Taṃ samīkṣya mahā|rājo yuktaṃ samuditair guṇaiḥ
niścitya sacivaiḥ sārdhaṃ yuvarājam amanyata.
Nānā|nagara|vāstavyān pṛthag|jānapadān api
samānināya medinyāḥ pradhānān pṛthivī|patiḥ.
Atha rāja|vitīrṇeṣu vividheṣv āsaneṣu ca

charge and give battle and lead an army skillfully. He was invincible in combat, even if the gods and *ásuras* themselves were to unite in anger against him. He was never spiteful, haughty or envious, and he had mastered his anger. He would never look down on any creature nor bow to the will of time. By his eminent virtues the prince won the esteem of people throughout all the three worlds, for he was patient as the earth, wise as Brihas·pati, and mighty as Indra, Shachi's lord. Rama's virtues were prized by all the people, a source of joy to his father, and lent the prince himself such splendor as the sun derives from its shining beams. His conduct and invincible valor made him so like one of the gods who guard the world that Earth herself desired to have him as her master.

Now, as King Dasha·ratha, slayer of enemies, observed the many incomparable virtues of his son, he fell to thinking. In his heart he cherished this single joyous thought: "When shall I see my dear son consecrated? His one desire is that the world should prosper, he shows compassion to all creatures and is loved in the world even more than I, like a cloud laden with rain. He is as mighty as Yama or Shakra, wise as Brihas·pati, steady as a mountain, and far richer in virtues than I. O that at my age I might go to heaven seeing my son holding sway over this entire land."

Recognizing that his son was endowed with these consummate virtues, the great king consulted with his advisers and chose him to be prince regent. The lord of earth then convened the chief men of the land from the various cities and provinces in which they lived. The nobles arrived and in the different places he assigned to them they solemnly

rājānam ev' âbhimukhā niṣedur niyatā nṛpāḥ.
Sa labdhamānair vinay'|ânvitair nṛpaiḥ
pur'|ālayair jānapadaiś ca mānavaiḥ
upopaviṣṭair nṛpatir vṛto babhau
sahasra|cakṣur bhagavān iv' âmaraiḥ.

2.1 TATAḤ PARIṢADAṂ sarvām āmantrya vasudh"|âdhipaḥ
hitam uddharṣaṇaṃ c' êdam uvāc' âpratimaṃ vacaḥ:
Dundubhi|svana|kalpena gambhīreṇ' ânunādinā
svareṇa mahatā rājā jīmūta iva nādayan
So 'ham Ikṣvākubhiḥ pūrvair nar'|êndraiḥ paripālitam.
śreyasā yoktu|kāmo 'smi sukh'|ârham akhilaṃ jagat.
May" âpy ācaritaṃ pūrvaiḥ panthānam anugacchatā
prajā nityam atandreṇa yathā|śakty abhirakṣatā.
2.5 Idaṃ śarīraṃ kṛtsnasya lokasya caratā hitam
pāṇḍur asy' ātapatrasyac chāyāyāṃ jaritaṃ mayā.
Prāpya varṣa|sahasrāṇi bahūny āyūṃṣi jīvitaḥ
jīrṇasy' âsya śarīrasya viśrāntim abhirocaye.
Rāja|prabhāva|juṣṭāṃ hi durvahām ajit'|êndriyaiḥ
pariśrānto 'smi lokasya gurvīṃ dharma|dhuraṃ vahan.
so 'haṃ viśramam icchāmi putraṃ kṛtvā prajā|hite
saṃnikṛṣṭān imān sarvān anumānya dvija|ṛṣabhān.
Anujāto hi me sarvair guṇair jyeṣṭho mam' ātmajaḥ
puraṃ|dara|samo vīrye Rāmaḥ para|puraṃ|jayaḥ.
2.10 Taṃ candram iva Puṣyeṇa yuktaṃ dharma|bhṛtāṃ varam
yauvarājyena yoktāsmi prītaḥ puruṣa|puṃgavam.
Anurūpaḥ sa vo nātho lakṣmīvāṃl Lakṣmaṇ'|âgrajaḥ
trailokyam api nāthena yena syān nāthavattaram.

took their seats, facing the king. The lord of men paid his respects to the nobles and the men of the city and provinces, and as they sat deferentially around him he resembled Indra, the thousand-eyed lord, surrounded by the deathless gods.

KING DASHA·RATHA, lord of earth, called the whole assembly to order, and, rumbling like a storm cloud, his loud voice deep and resonant as a bass drum, he made this incomparable speech to their delight and benefit: "The whole world has long been under the protection of Ikshváku kings. It is my desire to ensure its well-being, for continued happiness is its due. I myself have always kept to the path my ancestors followed and watched over my subjects unremittingly, to the best of my ability. And, in my striving for the benefit of the entire world, my body has grown old in the shade of the white parasol. I have lived a life of many, countless, years, and now I crave repose for this aged body of mine. I have grown weary bearing the burden of righteousness for the world. For it is heavy, one must have self-discipline to bear it and the royal powers it encompasses.

I seek respite by entrusting my subjects' welfare to the care of my son, with the approval of all you twice-born men assembled here. My eldest son was born resembling me in every virtue. He is a conqueror of enemy fortresses, as powerful as Indra, breaker of fortresses. It is my pleasure to invest Rama, champion of righteousness and bull among men, with the office of prince regent, a union as propitious as the moon's with the constellation Pushya. The majestic eldest brother of Lákshmana will be a fit and proper master for you—indeed, the three worlds all together would find a

Anena śreyasā sadyaḥ saṃyojy' âham imāṃ mahīm
gata|kleśo bhaviṣyāmi sute tasmin niveśya vai.»

Iti bruvantaṃ muditāḥ pratyanandan nṛpā nṛpam
vṛṣṭimantaṃ mahā|meghaṃ nardantam iva barhiṇaḥ.
Tasya dharm'|ârtha|viduṣo bhāvam ājñāya sarvaśaḥ
ūcuś ca manasā jñātvā vṛddhaṃ Daśarathaṃ nṛpam:
2.15 «Aneka|varṣa|sāhasro vṛddhas tvam asi pārthiva
sa Rāmaṃ yuvarājānam abhiṣiñcasva pārthivam.»
Iti tad|vacanaṃ śrutvā rājā teṣāṃ manaḥ|priyam
ajānann iva jijñāsur idaṃ vacanam abravīt:
«Kathaṃ nu mayi dharmeṇa pṛthivīm anuśāsati
bhavanto draṣṭum icchanti yuvarājaṃ mam' ātmajam?»

Te tam ūcur mah"|ātmānaṃ paura|jānapadaiḥ saha:
«bahavo nṛpa kalyāṇā guṇāḥ putrasya santi te.
Divyair guṇaiḥ Śakra|samo Rāmaḥ satya|parākramaḥ
Ikṣvākubhyo hi sarvebhyo 'py atirakto viśām|pate.
2.20 Rāmaḥ sat|puruṣo loke satya|dharma|parāyaṇaḥ
dharmajñaḥ satya|saṃdhaś ca śīlavān an|asūyakaḥ
Kṣāntaḥ sāntvayitā ślakṣṇaḥ kṛtajño vijit'|êndriyaḥ
mṛduś ca sthira|cittaś ca sadā bhavyo 'nasūyakaḥ.
Priya|vādī ca bhūtānāṃ satya|vādī ca Rāghavaḥ.
bahu|śrutānāṃ vṛddhānāṃ brāhmaṇānām upāsitā.
Ten' âsy' êh' âtulā kīrtir yaśas tejaś ca vardhate
dev'|âsura|manuṣyāṇāṃ sarv'|âstreṣu viśāradaḥ.

superior master in him. Once I have ensured the well-being of this land by entrusting it to this son of mine, I shall be free from care."

So the king spoke, and the nobles rejoiced at his words like peacocks at the rumble of a rain-laden cloud. They fully recognized that the aim of their aged king, Dasha·ratha, was embraced in the wisdom of righteousness and statecraft, and when they had reflected upon it they replied: "You are old, your majesty, and have lived many, countless, 2.15
years. You should consecrate Rama as prince regent of the land." But when the king heard their reply he pretended not to know it was their heart's desire, and in order to test them he asked: "How can it be that, while I am ruling the land in righteousness, you want to see my son become prince regent?"

In concert with the men of the city and provinces they answered great Dasha·ratha: "Your majesty, the virtues of your son are many and excellent. They are divine virtues, which make valiant Rama the equal of Shakra and elevate him far above all other Ikshvákus, lord of the peoples. All 2.20
the world knows Rama to be a decent man, for truth and righteousness are his first concern. And he is wise in the ways of righteousness, true to his word, a man of character and never spiteful. He is forbearing, conciliatory, kind-spoken, grateful and self-disciplined. He is gentle, firm of purpose, ever capable and unspiteful. He speaks kindly to all people, and yet he always tells the truth. He shows reverence for aged and deeply learned *brahmans*. Because of this his fame among us is without equal and his glory and power have steadily grown. He is proficient in the use of all the weapons

Yadā vrajati saṃgrāmaṃ grām'|ârthe nagarasya vā
gatvā Saumitri|sahito n' âvijitya nivartate.
Saṃgrāmāt punar āgamya kuñjareṇa rathena vā
paurān sva|janavan nityaṃ kuśalaṃ paripṛcchati.
Putreṣv agniṣu dāreṣu preṣya|śiṣya|gaṇeṣu ca
nikhilen' ānupūrvyā ca pitā putrān iv' āurasān.
‹śuśrūṣante ca vaḥ śiṣyāḥ? kaccit karmasu daṃśitāḥ?
iti› naḥ puruṣa|vyāghraḥ sadā Rāmo 'bhibhāṣate.

Vyasaneṣu manuṣyāṇāṃ bhṛśaṃ bhavati duḥkhitaḥ
utsaveṣu ca sarveṣu pit" êva parituṣyati.
Satya|vādī mah"|ēṣvāso vṛddha|sevī jit'|êndriyaḥ
vatsaḥ śreyasi jātas te diṣṭy" âsau tava Rāghavaḥ.
diṣṭyā putra|guṇair yukto Mārīca iva Kaśyapaḥ
Balam ārogyam āyuś ca Rāmasya vidit'|ātmanaḥ
āśaṃsate janaḥ sarvo rāṣṭre pura|vare tathā.
Abhyantaraś ca bāhyaś ca paura|jānapado janaḥ
striyo vṛddhās taruṇyaś ca sāyaṃ|prātaḥ samāhitāḥ.
Sarvān devān namasyanti Rāmasy' ârthe yaśasvinaḥ
teṣām āyācitaṃ deva tvat|prasādāt samṛdhyatām.
Rāmam indīvara|śyāmaṃ sarva|śatru|nibarhaṇam
paśyāmo yauvarājyasthaṃ tava rājottam'|ātmajam.
Taṃ deva|dev'|ôpamam ātmajaṃ te
sarvasya lokasya hite niviṣṭam
hitāya naḥ kṣipram udāra|juṣṭaṃ
mud" âbhiṣektuṃ varada tvam arhasi.»

of the gods, *ásuras* and men. Whenever he goes forth with Saumítri to battle in defense of a village or city, he always returns triumphant. And coming back from battle on chariot or elephant, Rama always stops to ask the men of the city after their welfare as if they were his kinsmen—about their sons, sacred fires, wives, servants and students, without omission and in due order, just as a father might ask his sons, his own flesh and blood. 'Do your students obey you? Are they prompt in their tasks?' This is how Rama, tiger among men, always questions us. 2.25-26

When misfortune strikes anyone Rama feels the sorrow keenly, and he takes the pleasure a father might in all the people's celebrations. He is a great archer, a man who tells the truth, who seeks the counsel of the aged and is master of his senses. How fortunate you are to be blessed with a son like your Rághava, who, like Maricha Káshyapa, has every virtue a son should have. The people of the kingdom and in this the foremost of cities wish the celebrated Rama strength, health and long life—all the people of the city and the provinces, outsiders as well as intimates. And at dawn and at dusk women young and old alike devoutly worship all the gods for glorious Rama's sake. By your grace, O god, let what they pray for come to pass. Grant, great king, that we may see Rama become prince regent, your son who is dark as the blue lotus, and deadly to his every enemy. O god, your godlike son is committed to the good of all the world, and so for our good, granter of boons, please consecrate the exalted prince joyfully and without delay." 2.30

3.1 Teṣām añjali|padmāni pragṛhītāni sarvaśaḥ
pratigṛhy' âbravīd rājā tebhyaḥ priya|hitaṃ vacaḥ:
«Aho 'smi parama|prītaḥ
prabhāvaś c' âtulo mama
yan me jyeṣṭhaṃ priyaṃ putraṃ
yauvarājyastham icchatha.»

Iti pratyarcya tān rājā brāhmaṇān idam abravīt
Vasiṣṭhaṃ Vāma|devaṃ ca teṣām ev' ôpaśṛṇvatām.
«Caitraḥ śrīmān ayaṃ māsaḥ puṇyaḥ puṣpita|kānanaḥ
yauvarājyāya Rāmasya sarvam ev' ôpakalpyatām.»
3.5 «Kṛtam ity» eva c' âbrūtām abhigamya jagatpatim
«yath"|ôkta|vacanaṃ prītau harṣayuktau dvija|ṛṣabhau.»
Tataḥ Sumantraṃ dyutimān rājā vacanam abravīt:
«Rāmaḥ kṛtātmā bhavatā śīghram ānīyatām iti.»
Sa «tath" êti» pratijñāya Sumantro rāja|śāsanāt
Rāmaṃ tatr' ānayāṃ cakre rathena rathināṃ varam.

Atha tatra samāsīnās tadā Daśarathaṃ nṛpam
prācy'|ôdīcyāḥ pratīcyāś ca dākṣiṇātyāś ca bhūmipāḥ.
Mlecchāś c' āryāś ca ye c' ânye vana|śail'|ânta|vāsinaḥ
upāsāṃ cakrire sarve taṃ devā iva Vāsavam.
3.10 Teṣāṃ madhye sa rāja|ṛṣir Marutām iva Vāsavaḥ
prāsādastho ratha|gataṃ dadarś' āyāntam ātmajam.
Gandharva|rāja|pratimaṃ loke vikhyāta|pauruṣam
dīrgha|bāhuṃ mahā|sattvaṃ matta|mātaṅga|gāminam.
Candra|kānt'|ānanaṃ Rāmam atīva priya|darśanam
rūp'|āudārya|guṇaiḥ puṃsāṃ dṛṣṭi|citt'|âpahāriṇam.
Gharm'|âbhitaptāḥ parjanyaṃ hlādayantam iva prajāḥ
na tatarpa samāyāntaṃ paśyamāno nar'|âdhipaḥ.

All around him they held out their hands cupped like lotuses, and the king acknowledged them, adding these kind and beneficial words: "Ah, how overjoyed I am. You have magnified my grandeur beyond all measure that you should want my beloved eldest son to become prince regent." 3.1

When the king had paid the *brahman*s this honor in return he addressed Vasíshtha and Vama·deva as the others stood listening. "This is the majestic, auspicious month of Chaitra, when the woods are in full bloom. Let all the preparations be made for Rama's installation as prince regent." "It shall be done," the two *brahman*s replied with joy and delight as they approached the lord of the world, "just as you command." Then the splendid king said to Sumántra, "Please bring Rama, my accomplished son, here at once." Sumántra assented and by order of the king went in his chariot to fetch Rama, best of chariot-fighters. 3.5

Meanwhile the kings who were seated there—the eastern, northern, western and southern kings, aryan and barbarian, and others who lived in the forest and mountain regions—all paid homage to King Dasha·ratha, as the gods do to Vásava. From the terrace of the palace where he stood in their midst like Vásava among the Maruts, the royal seer watched his son approaching in his chariot. Rama was the very image of the king of *gandhárva*s, and renowned throughout the world for his manliness as well. His arms were long, his strength immense, and he carried himself like a bull elephant in rut. He was extremely handsome and his face had the lovely glow of moonlight. With his beauty and nobility he ravished both the sight and the hearts of men. He was like the rain that refreshes people parched by summer's heat, 3.10

Avatārya Sumantras taṃ Rāghavaṃ syandan'|ôttamāt
pituḥ samīpaṃ gacchantaṃ prāñjaliḥ pṛṣṭhato 'nvagāt.
Sa taṃ Kailāsa|śṛṅgābhaṃ prāsādaṃ nara|puṃgavaḥ
āruroha nṛpaṃ draṣṭuṃ saha sūtena Rāghavaḥ.
Sa prāñjalir abhipretya praṇataḥ pitur antike
nāma svaṃ śrāvayan Rāmo vavande caraṇau pituḥ.
Taṃ dṛṣṭvā praṇataṃ pārśve kṛt'|âñjali|puṭaṃ nṛpaḥ
gṛhy' âñjalau samākṛṣya sasvaje priyam ātmajam.
Tasmai c' âbhyudyataṃ śrīmān maṇi|kāñcana|bhūṣitam
dideśa rājā ruciraṃ Rāmāya param'|āsanam.
Tad āsana|varaṃ prāpya vyadīpayata Rāghavaḥ
svay" êva prabhayā merum udaye vimalo raviḥ.
Tena vibhrājitā tatra sā sabh" âbhivyarocata
vimala|graha|nakṣatrā śāradī dyaur iv' êndunā.

Taṃ paśyamāno nṛpatis tutoṣa priyam ātmajam
alaṃkṛtam iv' ātmānam ādarśa|tala|saṃsthitam.
Sa taṃ sa|smitam ābhāṣya putraṃ putravatāṃ varaḥ
uvāc' êdaṃ vaco rājā dev'|êndram iva Kaśyapaḥ:
«Jyeṣṭhāyām asi me patnyāṃ sadṛśyāṃ sadṛśaḥ sutaḥ
utpannas tvaṃ guṇa|śreṣṭho mama Rām' ātmajaḥ priyaḥ.
Tvayā yataḥ prajāś c' êmāḥ sva|guṇair anurañjitāḥ
tasmāt tvaṃ Puṣya|yogena yauvarājyam avāpnuhi.

and the lord of men could not get enough of gazing at him as he drew near.

Sumántra helped Rághava down from his splendid chariot and followed at the rear, hands cupped in reverence, as Rama made his way into his father's presence. Accompanied 3.15
by the charioteer, Rághava, bull among men, went to see his father, ascending to the rooftop terrace lofty as Mount Kailása's peak. With hands cupped in reverence Rama came before his father. He prostrated himself and, announcing his name, did obeisance at his father's feet. Gazing at his dear son bowed down beside him with hands cupped in reverence, the king drew him up by his clasped hands and embraced him. The majestic king then directed Rama to the throne made ready for him, a splendid one brilliantly set with gems and gold. As Rághava sat down, the throne seemed to glow more brightly still from the prince's own luster, like Mount Meru when the bright sun rises. As the 3.20
autumn sky, for all its bright planets and constellations, is illuminated still further by the moon, so was the assembly hall lit up by the radiance Rama shed.

Dasha·ratha observed his dear son with keen satisfaction. It was as if he were looking in a mirror and seeing an enhanced reflection of himself. The king, and most blessed of fathers, turned to his son with a smile and in words Káshyapa might once have used with Indra, lord of gods, he said: "Rama, my dear son, you were born of my eldest wife—a worthy son of a worthy woman—and you are most virtuous. And since by your virtues you have won the loyalty of these my subjects, you shall become prince regent on

3.25 Kāmatas tvaṃ prakṛty” âiva vinīto guṇavān asi
guṇavaty api tu snehāt putra vakṣyāmi te hitam.
Bhūyo vinayam āsthāya bhava nityaṃ jit’|êndriyaḥ
kāma|krodha|samutthāni tyajethā vyasanāni ca.
Parokṣayā vartamāno vṛttyā pratyakṣayā tathā
amātya|prabhṛtīḥ sarvāḥ prakṛtīś c’ ânurañjaya.
Tuṣṭ’|ânurakta|prakṛtir yaḥ pālayati medinīm
tasya nandanti mitrāṇi labdhv” âmṛtam iv’ âmarāḥ
tasmāt putra tvam ātmānaṃ niyamy’ âiva samācara.»

Tac chrutvā suhṛdas tasya Rāmasya priya|kāriṇaḥ
tvaritāḥ śīghram abhyetya Kausalyāyai nyavedayan.
3.30 Sā hiraṇyaṃ ca gāś c’ âiva ratnāni vividhāni ca
vyādideśa priy’|ākhyebhyaḥ Kausalyā pramad”|ôttamā.
Ath’ âbhivādya rājānaṃ ratham āruhya Rāghavaḥ
yayau svaṃ dyutimad veśma jan’|âughaiḥ pratipūjitaḥ.
Te c’ âpi paurā nṛpater vacas
tac chrutvā tadā lābham iv’ êṣṭam āpya
nar’|êndram āmantrya gṛhāṇi gatvā
devān samānarcur atīva hṛṣṭāḥ.

4.1 GATEṢV ATHA NṚPO bhūyaḥ paureṣu saha mantribhiḥ
mantrayitvā tataś cakre niścayajñaḥ sa niścayam:
«Śva eva Puṣyo bhavitā śvo ’bhiṣecyeta me sutaḥ
Rāmo rājīva|tāmr’|âkṣo yauvarājya iti prabhuḥ.»

the day of Pushya's conjunction. You are by nature disci- 3.25
plined and virtuous, as much as one could desire. But still, in spite of these virtues, I shall give you some beneficial advice, my son, because of my affection for you. Impose even stricter discipline on yourself, exercise constant self-control and avoid all the vices that spring from desire and anger. Actively concern yourself with both overt and covert activities, to retain the loyalty of all your subjects, from the ministers down. He who protects the earth while keeping the people content and loyal will give his allies cause to rejoice like the deathless gods when they obtained nectar. So hold yourself in check, my son, and behave in this fashion."

Upon hearing this speech Rama's friends hurried off bear- 3.30
ing the good news, and at once conveyed it to Kausálya. The excellent lady directed that gold and cows and an assortment of precious objects be given to those who brought the news. Rághava, meanwhile, after doing obeisance to the king, mounted the chariot and started back to his splendid dwelling amid the acclaim of the multitude. When the townsmen heard the king's announcement, it was as if they had secured some longed-for object and, on taking leave of the lord of men, they went home and worshipped the gods in deep delight.

After the townsmen had gone the king held further 4.1
consultation with his counsellors. When he learned what they had determined the lord declared with determination: "Tomorrow is Pushya, so tomorrow my son Rama, his eyes as coppery as lotuses, shall be consecrated as prince regent."

Taṃ śrutvā samanuprāptaṃ Rāmaṃ Daśaratho nṛpaḥ
praveśayām āsa gṛhaṃ vivikṣuḥ priyam uttamam.
Praviśann eva ca śrīmān Rāghavo bhavanaṃ pituḥ
dadarśa pitaraṃ dūrāt praṇipatya kṛt'|âñjaliḥ.
Praṇamantaṃ samutthāpya taṃ pariṣvajya bhūmipaḥ
pradiśya c' âsmai ruciram āsanaṃ punar abravīt:
«Rāma vṛddho 'smi dīrgh'|āyur bhuktā bhogā may" ēpsitāḥ
annavadbhiḥ kratu|śatais tath" êṣṭaṃ bhūri|dakṣiṇaiḥ.
Jātam iṣṭam apatyaṃ me tvam ady' ânupamaṃ bhuvi
dattam iṣṭam adhītaṃ ca mayā puruṣa|sattama.
Anubhūtāni ceṣṭāni mayā vīra sukhāni ca
deva|ṛṣi|pitṛviprāṇām anṛṇo 'smi tath" ātmanaḥ.
Na kiṃ cin mama kartavyaṃ tav' ânyatr' âbhiṣecanāt
ato yat tvām ahaṃ brūyāṃ tan me tvaṃ kartum arhasi.

Retiring then to his private chamber, King Dasha·ratha instructed the charioteer Sumántra to fetch Rama again. Upon receiving his orders the charioteer set out at once for Rama's abode to fetch him. The guards informed Rama 4.5
that Sumántra had returned, and as soon as he learned of his arrival he felt uneasy. Rama had him shown in at once. "Tell me the reason for your returning," he said, "and omit nothing." The charioteer replied, "The king wishes to see you. Such is the message, but you of course must be the judge of your comings and goings." Such were the charioteer's words, and, upon hearing them, Rama hurried out and went to the palace to see the lord of men once more.

When word was brought that Rama had arrived, King Dasha·ratha had him shown into his chamber, anxious to pass on the important news. As majestic Rághava entered 4.10
the residence he caught sight of his father, and at a distance prostrated himself, cupping his hands in reverence. He bowed low until the protector of the earth bade him rise and embraced him. Then, directing him to a splendid seat, the king once again addressed him: "Rama, I am old, my life has been long. I have enjoyed all the pleasures I desired. I have performed hundreds of sacrifices rich in food, with lavish priestly stipends. The child I wanted—and you are he—was born to me, a son who has no peer on earth today, the very best of men. I have given alms, offered sacrifices and studied the scriptures. I have experienced every pleasure, everything I wanted—and thus, my mighty son, I have discharged all my debts, to the gods, the seers, my ancestors, the *brahman*s and to myself. There is nothing 3.15

Adya prakṛtayaḥ sarvās tvām icchanti nar'|âdhipam
atas tvāṃ yuvarājānam abhiṣekṣyāmi putraka.
Api c' âdy' âśubhān Rāma: svapnān paśyāmi dāruṇān
sa|nirghātā mah"|ôlkāś ca patantīha mahā|svanāḥ.
Avaṣṭabdhaṃ ca me Rāma nakṣatraṃ dāruṇair grahaiḥ
āvedayanti daivajñāḥ sūry'|Âṅgāraka|Rāhubhiḥ.
Prāyeṇa hi nimittānām īdṛśānāṃ samudbhave
rājā vā mṛtyum āpnoti ghorāṃ v" āpadam ṛcchati.
Tad yāvad eva me ceto na vimuhyati Rāghava
tāvad ev' âbhiṣiñcasva calā hi prāṇināṃ matiḥ.
Adya candro 'bhyupagataḥ Puṣyāt pūrvaṃ Punarvasum
śvaḥ Puṣya yogaṃ niyataṃ vakṣyante daiva|cintakāḥ.
Tatra Puṣye 'bhiṣiñcasva manas tvarayatīva mām
śvas tv" âham abhiṣekṣyāmi yauvarājye paraṃ|tapa.

Tasmāt tvay" âdya vratinā niśeyaṃ niyatātmanā
saha vadhv" ôpavastavyā darbha|prastara|śāyinā.
Suhṛdaś c' âpramattās tvāṃ rakṣantv adya samantataḥ
bhavanti bahu|vighnāni kāryāṇy evaṃ|vidhāni hi.
Viproṣitaś ca Bharato yāvad eva purād itaḥ
tāvad ev' âbhiṣekas te prāpta|kālo mato mama.
Kāmaṃ khalu satāṃ vṛtte bhrātā te Bharataḥ sthitaḥ
jyeṣṭh'|ânuvartī dharm'|ātmā s'|ânukrośo jit'|êndriyaḥ.
Kiṃ tu cittaṃ manuṣyāṇām anityam iti me matiḥ

further required of me except your consecration. Therefore you must do for me what I am about to tell you.

All the subjects today expressed their wish to have you for their king, and so, my dear son, I will consecrate you as prince regent. But there is more, Rama: I have had dreams lately, inauspicious, ominous dreams. Great meteors and lightning bolts out of a clear sky have been falling nearby with a terrible crash. The astrologers also inform me, Rama, that my birth star is obstructed by hostile planets, Angáraka, Rahu and the sun. When such portents as these appear it usually means a king is about to die or meet with some dreadful misfortune. You must therefore have yourself consecrated, Rághava, before my resolve fails me. For the minds of men are changeable. Today the moon has reached Punarvasu, just to the east of Pushya; tomorrow, the astrologers predict, its conjunction with Pushya is certain. On this very Pushya day you must have yourself consecrated—I feel a sense of great urgency. Tomorrow, slayer of enemies, I will consecrate you as prince regent.

Therefore today you and your wife must take a vow to remain chaste this night, to fast and sleep upon a bed of *darbha* grass. Have your friends guard you warily today at every turn, for there are many impediments to affairs of this sort. I believe the best time for your consecration is precisely while Bhárata is absent from the city. Granted, your brother keeps to the ways of the good, defers to his elder brother, and is righteous, compassionate and self-disciplined. Still,

satāṃ ca dharma|nityānāṃ kṛta|śobhi ca Rāghava.»

Ity uktaḥ so 'bhyanujñātaḥ śvo|bhāviny abhiṣecane
vraj' êti Rāmaḥ pitaram abhivādy' âbhyayād gṛham.
Praviśya c' ātmano veśma rājñ" ôddiṣṭe 'bhiṣecane
tasmin kṣaṇe vinirgatya mātur antaḥ|puraṃ yayau.
Tatra tāṃ pravaṇām eva mātaraṃ kṣauma|vāsinīm
vāgyatāṃ devat"|āgāre dadarśa yācatīṃ śriyam.
Prāg eva c' āgatā tatra Sumitrā Lakṣmaṇas tathā
Sītā c' ānāyitā śrutvā priyaṃ Rām'|âbhiṣecanam.
Tasmin kāle hi Kausalyā tasthāv āmīlit'|êkṣaṇā
Sumitray" ânvāsyamānā Sītayā Lakṣmaṇena ca.
Śrutvā Puṣyeṇa putrasya yauvarājy'|âbhiṣecanam
prāṇāyāmena puruṣaṃ dhyāyamānā Janārdanam.

Tathā sa|niyamām eva so 'bhigamy' âbhivādya ca
uvāca vacanaṃ Rāmo harṣayaṃs tām idaṃ tadā:
«Amba pitrā niyukto 'smi prajā|pālana|karmaṇi
bhavitā śvo 'bhiṣeko me yathā me śāsanaṃ pituḥ.
Sītay" âpy upavastavyā rajanīyaṃ mayā saha
evam ṛtvig|upādhyāyaiḥ saha mām uktavān pitā.
Yāni yāny atra yogyāni śvo|bhāviny abhiṣecane
tāni me maṅgalāny adya Vaidehyāś caiva kāraya.»

Rághava, it is my firm belief that the mind of man is inconstant, even the mind of a good man constant in righteousness. Even such a man is best presented with an accomplished fact."

Once told his consecration was set for the next day, Rama was given leave to go, and after doing obeisance to his father, he went home. In keeping with the king's instructions regarding the consecration, he entered his house but then left immediately and went to his mother's apartment. There in 4.30
the shrine-room he saw her, clothed in linen, solemnly and silently praying for his royal fortune. Sumítra and Lákshmana had already come, and Sita had been sent for as soon as they heard the news of Rama's consecration. At that moment Kausálya stood with her eyes closed, while Sumítra, Sita and Lákshmana were seated behind her. From the moment she received word that her son was to be consecrated as prince regent on Pushya day, she had been controlling her breathing and meditating on the Primal Being, Janárdana.

While she was engaged in these observances Rama approached her and did obeisance. Then to her delight he said: "Mother, my father has appointed me to the task of 4.35
protecting the people. On father's instructions my consecration will take place tomorrow. And as Father, with his priests and preceptors, directs, Sita and I both are to fast tonight. Please see that any auspicious rites appropriate for my consecration tomorrow are performed today on behalf of Vaidéhi and me."

Etac chrutvā tu Kausalyā cira|kāl'|âbhikāṅkṣitam
harṣa|bāṣpa|kalaṃ vākyam idaṃ Rāmam abhāṣata:
«Vatsa Rāma ciraṃ jīva hatās te paripanthinaḥ
jñātīn me tvaṃ śriyā yuktaḥ Sumitrāyāś ca nandaya.
Kalyāṇe bata nakṣatre mayi jāto 'si putraka
yena tvayā Daśaratho guṇair ārādhitaḥ pitā.
Amoghaṃ bata me kṣāntaṃ puruṣe puṣkar'|ēkṣaṇe
y" êyam Ikṣvāku|rājya|śrīḥ putra tvāṃ saṃśrayiṣyati.»
Ity evam ukto mātr" êdaṃ Rāmo bhāratam abravīt
prāñjaliṃ prahvam āsīnam abhivīkṣya smayann iva:
«Lakṣmaṇ' êmāṃ mayā sārdhaṃ
praśādhi tvaṃ vasuṃ|dharām
dvitīyaṃ me 'ntar|ātmānaṃ
tvām iyaṃ śrīr upasthitā.
Saumitre bhuṅkṣva bhogāṃs tvam iṣṭān rājya|phalāni ca
jīvitaṃ ca hi rājyaṃ ca tvad|artham abhikāmaye.»
Ity uktvā Lakṣmaṇaṃ Rāmo mātarāv abhivādya ca
abhyanujñāpya Sītāṃ ca jagāma svaṃ niveśanam.

Saṃdiśya Rāmaṃ nṛpatiḥ śvo|bhāviny abhiṣecane
purohitaṃ samāhūya Vasiṣṭham idam abravīt:
«Gacch' ôpavāsaṃ Kākutsthaṃ kāray' âdya tapo|dhana
śrī|yaśo|rājya|lābhāya vadhvā saha yata|vratam.»
«Tath" êti» ca sa rājānam uktvā vedavidāṃ varaḥ
svayaṃ Vasiṣṭho bhagavān yayau Rāma|niveśanam.

Hearing him say what she had so long desired, Kausálya spoke to Rama in words muffled with sobs of joy: "Rama, my child, long may you live. May all who block your way be vanquished. And when you are invested with sovereignty may you bring joy to my kinsmen and Sumítra's. Truly it 4.40
was under a lucky star I bore you, my dear son, since by your virtues you have won the favor of your father, Dasha·ratha. Truly the vows of self-denial I made to the lotus-eyed Primal Being were not in vain, since the royal fortune of the Ikshvákus will pass to you, my son."

So his mother spoke, and Rama then turned to his brother. He smiled as he looked at him sitting diffidently nearby, hands cupped in reverence, and he said: "Come, Lákshmana, rule this land with me. Sovereignty falls to your share, too, for you are my second self. You too shall enjoy every pleasure you desire, Saumítri, and all the fruits of kingship, for the kingship, and life itself, I covet only for your sake." So Rama spoke to Lákshmana, and then, 4.45
doing obeisance to his mothers and bidding Sita take leave of them, he returned home.

WHEN HE HAD given Rama his instructions regarding the 5.1
consecration on the coming day, the lord of men summoned his family priest Vasíshtha and said: "Go, ascetic, and assist Kakútstha and his wife in undertaking a fast today, so that my son, a man strict in his vows, may gain majesty, glory and kingship." "So be it," said the holy Vasíshtha, greatest of Vedic scholars, in reply to the king, and he went himself to Rama's residence.

Sa Rāma|bhavanaṃ prāpya
pāṇḍur'|âbhra|ghana|prabham
tisraḥ kakṣyā rathen' âiva
viveśa muni|sattamaḥ.
Tam āgatam ṛṣiṃ Rāmas tvarann iva sa|saṃbhramaḥ
mānayiṣyan sa mān'|ârhaṃ niścakrāma niveśanāt.
Abhyetya tvaramāṇaś ca rath'|âbhyāśaṃ manīṣiṇaḥ
tato 'vatārayām āsa parigṛhya rathāt svayam.
Sa c' âinaṃ praśritaṃ dṛṣṭvā saṃbhāṣy' âbhiprasādya ca
priy'|ârhaṃ harṣayan Rāmam ity uvāca purohitaḥ:
«Prasannas te pitā Rāma yauvarājyam avāpsyasi
upavāsaṃ bhavān adya karotu saha Sītayā.
Prātas tvām abhiṣektā hi yauvarājye nar'|âdhipaḥ
pitā Daśarathaḥ prītyā Yayātiṃ Nahuṣo yathā.»
Ity uktvā sa tadā Rāmam upavāsaṃ yata|vratam
mantravat kārayām āsa Vaidehyā sahitaṃ muniḥ.
Tato yathāvad Rāmeṇa sa rājño gurur arcitaḥ
abhyanujñāpya Kākutsthaṃ yayau Rāma|niveśanāt.
Suhṛdbhis tatra Rāmo 'pi tān anujñāpya sarvaśaḥ
sabhājito viveś' âtha tān anujñāpya sarvaśaḥ.
Hṛṣṭa|nārī|nara|yutaṃ Rāma|veśma tadā babhau
yathā matta|dvija|gaṇaṃ praphulla|nalinaṃ saraḥ.
Sa rāja|bhavana|prakhyāt tasmād Rāma|niveśanāt
nirgatya dadṛśe mārgaṃ Vasiṣṭho jana|saṃvṛtam.
Vṛnda|vṛndair Ayodhyāyāṃ rāja|mārgāḥ samantataḥ
babhūvur abhisaṃbādhāḥ kutūhala|janair vṛtāḥ.
Jana|vṛnd'|ōrmi|saṃgharṣa|harṣa|svanavatas tadā

Arriving at Rama's dwelling, which looked like a bank of silvery clouds, the great sage entered and drove through the three courtyards in his chariot. At the arrival of this venerable seer, Rama hurried from his house in great excitement, to show him veneration. Hurrying to the side of the wise man's chariot and lending him support, he helped him to climb down. The family priest, noting Rama's deference, addressed him with compliments, and then, to the delight of the prince, who was deserving of every kindness, he said: "Your father is well-disposed toward you, Rama; you shall become prince regent. Today you and Sita must fast. For tomorrow morning the lord of men, your father Dasha·ratha, shall consecrate you as prince regent, with all the joy Náhusha felt in consecrating Yayáti."

So the sage spoke, and then, with the appropriate Vedic verses, he assisted Vaidéhi and Rama, a man of strict vows, in undertaking their fast. Afterward, when he had been duly honored by Rama, the king's *guru* took leave of Kakútstha and left his residence. Rama remained awhile sitting there in the company of his affable friends. Then, with their best wishes he took leave of them all and went inside. Delight filled the throngs of men and women in Rama's house so that for the moment it resembled a pond of blooming lotuses, where cheerful birds are flocking.

As Vasíshtha emerged from Rama's kingly residence he saw the highway filled with people. Curious onlookers, crowd upon crowd of them, were jamming every inch of the royal highways in Ayódhya. Like waves the crowds dashed together, and the royal highway sent up a roar of delight, like the sound the ocean makes. The city was being decked with

babhūva rāja|mārgasya sāgarasy' êva nisvanaḥ.
Sikta|saṃmṛṣṭa|rathyā hi tad ahar vana|mālinī
āsīd Ayodhyā nagarī samucchrita|gṛha|dhvajā.
Tadā hy Ayodhyā nilayaḥ sa|strī|bāla|balo janaḥ
Rām'|âbhiṣekam ākāṅkṣann ākāṅkṣann udayaṃ raveḥ.
Praj"|âlaṃkāra|bhūtaṃ ca janasy' ānanda|vardhanam
utsuko 'bhūj jano draṣṭuṃ tam Ayodhyā mah"|ôtsavam.
5.20 Evaṃ taṃ jana|saṃbādhaṃ rāja|mārgaṃ purohitaḥ
vyūhann iva jan'|âughaṃ taṃ śanai rāja|kulaṃ yayau.
Sit'|âbhra|śikhara|prakhyaṃ prāsadam adhiruhya saḥ
samiyāya nar'|êndreṇa Śakreṇ' êva Bṛhaspatiḥ.
Tam āgatam abhipreksya hitvā rāj'|āsanaṃ nṛpaḥ
papraccha sa ca tasmai tat kṛtam ity abhyavedayat.
Guruṇā tv abhyanujñāto manuj'|âughaṃ visṛjya tam
viveś' ântaḥ|puraṃ rājā siṃho giri|guhām iva.
Tad agrya|veṣa|pramadā|jan'|ākulaṃ
mah"|êndra|veśma|pratimaṃ niveśanam
vyadīpayaṃś cāru viveśa pārthivaḥ
śaśīva tārā|gaṇa|saṃkulaṃ nabhaḥ.

6.1 GATE PUROHITE Rāmaḥ snāto niyata|mānasaḥ
saha patnyā viśālākṣyā Nārāyaṇam upāgamat.
Pragṛhya śirasā pātrīṃ haviṣo vidhivat tadā
mahate daivatāy' ājyaṃ juhāva jvalite 'nale.
Śeṣaṃ ca haviṣas tasya prāśy' āśāsy' ātmanaḥ priyam
dhyāyan Nārāyaṇaṃ devaṃ sv'|āstīrṇe kuśa|saṃstare.

fresh wildflower garlands, banners run up high above the houses, the thoroughfares swept and sprinkled. All the people who lived in Ayódhya—women, children and the aged alike—were eagerly waiting for sunrise and Rama's consecration. They were anxious to witness Ayódhya's greatest festival, a source of joy to the people, and an occasion for their adornment. The royal highway was so jammed that 5.20
the family priest seemed to part a flood of people as he slowly made his way back to the palace. He ascended to the rooftop terrace, like a mountain peak wreathed in white clouds, and rejoined the lord of men as Brihas·pati might rejoin Shakra.

Seeing he had come, the king left his throne and questioned him, and Vasíshtha informed him that his mission had been carried out. Given leave then by his *guru*, the king dismissed the multitudes of people and withdrew into his private chamber, like a lion into a mountain cave. His palace, rivalling great Indra's palace, was crowded with womenfolk in rich attire, and as the king entered he shed over it as brilliant a light as the hare-marked moon sheds over the sky with its crowds of stars.

When the family priest had gone Rama bathed and 6.1
then, restraining his desire, he worshipped Naráyana in the company of his large-eyed wife. With bowed head he held out the oblation vessel. Then, in accordance with the ritual precepts, he offered the clarified butter in a blazing fire to the great divinity. He consumed the remains of the oblation and earnestly made his wish. Meditating on the god Naráyana, maintaining silence and restraining his desire, the prince lay

Vāgyataḥ saha Vaidehyā bhūtvā niyata|mānasaḥ
śrīmaty āyatane Viṣṇoḥ śiśye nara|var'|ātmajaḥ.
Eka|yām'|âvaśiṣṭāyāṃ rātryāṃ prativibudhya saḥ
alaṃkāra|vidhiṃ kṛtsnaṃ kārayām āsa veśmanaḥ.
Tatra śṛṇvan sukhā vācaḥ sūta|māgadha|bandinām
pūrvāṃ saṃdhyām upāsīno jajāpa yata|mānasaḥ.
Tuṣṭāva praṇataś c' âiva śirasā Madhu|sūdanam
vimala|kṣauma|saṃvīto vācayām āsa ca dvijān.

Teṣāṃ puṇyāha|ghoṣo 'tha gambhīra|madhuras tadā
Ayodhyāṃ pūrayām āsa tūrya|ghoṣ'|ânunāditaḥ.
Kṛt'|ôpavāsaṃ tu tadā Vaidehyā saha Rāghavam
Ayodhyā nilayaḥ śrutvā sarvaḥ pramudito janaḥ.
Tataḥ paura|janaḥ sarvaḥ śrutvā Rām'|âbhiṣecanam
prabhātāṃ rajanīṃ dṛṣṭvā cakre śobhayituṃ purīm.
Sit'|âbhra|śikhar'|ābheṣu devat"|āyataneṣu ca
catuṣ|patheṣu rathyāsu caityeṣv aṭṭālakeṣu ca.
Nānā|paṇya|samṛddheṣu vaṇijām āpaṇeṣu ca
kuṭumbināṃ samṛddheṣu śrīmatsu bhavaneṣu ca.
Sabhāsu c' âiva sarvāsu vṛkṣeṣv ālakṣiteṣu ca
dhvajāḥ samucchritāś citrāḥ patākāś c' âbhavaṃs tadā.
Naṭa|nartaka|saṃghānāṃ gāyakānāṃ ca gāyatām
manaḥ|karṇa|sukhā vācaḥ śuśruvuś ca tatas tataḥ.
Rām'|âbhiṣava|yuktāś ca kathāś cakrur mitho janāḥ
Rām'|âbhiṣeke saṃprāpte catvareṣu gṛheṣu ca.
Bālā api krīḍamānā gṛha|dvāreṣu saṃghaśaḥ
Rām'|âbhiṣava|saṃyuktāś cakrur eva mithaḥ kathāḥ.

down to sleep with Vaidéhi on a thick-spread bed of *kusha* grass in the majestic sanctuary of Vishnu. With one watch 6.5
of the night remaining, he awoke and saw to the decorating of the entire house. This done, and hearing the pleasant voices of the bards, genealogists and panegyrists, he began to intone his prayers in deep concentration, performing the morning worship. Dressed in spotless linen, his head bowed low, he glorified Vishnu, crusher of Madhu, and had the *brahman*s pronounce their blessings.

The deep sweet sound of their benedictions was echoed by the sound of pipes and pervaded all Ayódhya. All the people who lived in Ayódhya were elated to hear that Rághava and Vaidéhi had undertaken their fast. All the people of the 6.10
town had heard about Rama's consecration, and so when they saw night brighten into dawn they began to adorn the city. On sanctuaries that looked like mountain peaks wreathed in white clouds, at crossroads and thoroughfares, on shrines and watchtowers, on the shops of merchants rich in their many kinds of wares, on the majestic, rich dwellings of householders, on all the assembly halls and on prominent trees, colorful banners and pennants were run up high. There were troupes of actors and dancers, there were minstrels singing and their voices could be heard everywhere, so pleasing to the ear and heart. In public squares 6.15
and private houses people spoke with one another in praise of Rama, now that his consecration was at hand. Even children playing in groups at their front doors talked together in praise of Rama.

Kṛta|puṣp'|ôpahāraś ca dhūpa|gandh'|âdhivāsitaḥ
rāja|mārgaḥ kṛtaḥ śrīmān paurai Rām'|âbhiṣecane.
Prakāśī|karaṇ'|ârthaṃ ca niś"|āgamana|śaṅkayā
dīpa|vṛkṣāṃs tathā cakrur anu rathyāsu sarvaśaḥ.
Alaṃkāraṃ purasy' âivaṃ kṛtvā tat puravāsinaḥ
ākāṅkṣamāṇā Rāmasya yauvarājy'|âbhiṣecanam.
Sametya saṃghaśaḥ sarve catvareṣu sabhāsu ca
kathayanto mithas tatra praśaśaṃsur jan'|âdhipam:
«Aho mah"|ātmā rāj" âyam Ikṣvāku|kula|nandanaḥ
jñātvā yo vṛddham ātmānaṃ Rāmaṃ rājye 'bhiṣekṣyati.
Sarve hy anugṛhītāḥ sma yan no Rāmo mahī|patiḥ
cirāya bhavitā goptā dṛṣṭa|loka|par'|âvaraḥ.
Anuddhatamanā vidvān dharm'|ātmā bhrātṛ|vatsalaḥ
yathā ca bhrātṛṣu snigdhas tath" âsmāsv api Rāghavaḥ.
Ciraṃ jīvatu dharm'|ātmā rājā Daśaratho 'naghaḥ
yat|prasāden' âbhiṣiktaṃ Rāmaṃ drakṣyāmahe vayam!»
Evaṃ|vidhaṃ kathayatāṃ paurāṇāṃ śuśruvus tadā
digbhyo 'pi śruta|vṛttāntāḥ prāptā jānapadā janāḥ.
Te tu digbhyaḥ purīṃ prāptā draṣṭuṃ Rām'|âbhiṣecanam
Rāmasya pūrayām āsuḥ purīṃ jānapadā janāḥ.
Jan'|âughais tair visarpadbhiḥ śuśruve tatra nisvanaḥ
parvasūdīrṇavegasya sāgarasy' êva nisvanaḥ.
Tatas tad indra|kṣaya|saṃnibhaṃ puraṃ
didṛkṣubhir jānapadair upāgataiḥ
samantataḥ sa|svanam ākulaṃ babhau
samudra|yādobhir iv' ârṇav'|ôdakam.

The townsmen beautified the royal highway, too, for Rama's consecration, placing offerings of flowers there and perfuming it with fragrant incense. And anticipating that night would fall, they set up lantern-trees for illumination everywhere along the thoroughfares. Thus the residents decorated their city. Afterward, eagerly waiting for Rama's consecration as prince regent, they grouped together in public 6.20
squares and in assembly halls. And there in conversation with each other they sang the praises of the lord of the people: "Ah, what a great man our king is, the delight of the House of the Ikshvákus, to recognize that he is old and to be ready to consecrate Rama as king. What a blessing to us all that for a long time to come Rama will be the lord of earth and our protector. For Rághava can tell good people from bad, he is wise and righteous and not arrogant. He loves his brothers and shows us the same affection he shows to them. Long live the righteous king, blameless Dasha·ratha, by whose grace we shall witness the consecration of Rama!"

As the townsmen conversed in this fashion, the people 6.25
of the provinces listened; for they too had come from every quarter when they got word of the event. The people of the provinces had come to the city from every quarter to witness Rama's consecration, and they filled his city to overflowing. And as the waves of people rolled in, one could hear a sound like that of the sea when its swell is raised on a full-moon night. The city, resembling Indra's residence, grew so noisy and congested everywhere with spectators arriving from the provinces that it looked like the ocean waters teeming with all the creatures of the deep.

7–12
THE BOONS OF KAIKÉYI

7.1 Jñāti|dāsī yato jātā Kaikeyyās tu sah'|ôṣitā
prāsādaṃ candra|saṃkāśam āruroha yadṛcchayā.
Sikta|rāja|pathāṃ kṛtsnāṃ prakīrṇa|kamal'|ôtpalām
Ayodhyāṃ Mantharā tasmāt prāsādād anvavaikṣata.
Patākābhir var'|ârhābhir dhvajaiś ca samalaṃkṛtām
siktāṃ candana|toyaiś ca śiraḥ|snāta|janair vṛtām
Avidūre sthitāṃ dṛṣṭvā dhātrīṃ papraccha Mantharā:
«uttamen' âbhisaṃyuktā harṣeṇ' ârthaparā satī?
7.5 Rāma|mātā dhanaṃ kiṃ nu janebhyaḥ saṃprayacchati?
atimātraṃ praharṣo 'yaṃ kiṃ janasya ca śaṃsa me?
kārayiṣyati kiṃ v" âpi saṃprahṛṣṭo mahī|patiḥ?»
Vidīryamāṇā harṣeṇa dhātrī paramayā mudā
ācacakṣe 'tha kubjāyai bhūyasīṃ Rāghave śriyam:
«Śvaḥ Puṣyeṇa jita|krodhaṃ yauvarājyena Rāghavam
rājā Daśaratho Rāmam abhiṣecayit" ânagham.»

Dhātryās tu vacanaṃ śrutvā kubjā kṣipram amarṣitā
Kailāsa|śikhar'|ākārāt prāsādād avarohata.
Sā dahyamānā kopena Mantharā pāpa|darśinī
śayānām etya Kaikeyīm idaṃ vacanam abravīt:
7.10 «Uttiṣṭha mūḍhe! kiṃ śeṣe bhayaṃ tvām abhivartate?
upapluta|mah"|âughena kim ātmānaṃ na budhyase?
Aniṣṭe subhag'|ākāre saubhāgyena vikatthase
calaṃ hi tava saubhāgyaṃ nadyaḥ srota iv' ôṣṇage.»
Evam uktā tu Kaikeyī ruṣṭayā paruṣaṃ vacaḥ
kubjayā pāpa|darśinyā viṣādam agamat param.

Now, Kaikéyi's family servant, who had lived with her from the time of her birth, had happened to ascend to the rooftop terrace that shone like the moon. From the terrace Mánthara could see all Ayódhya—the king's way newly sprinkled, the lotuses and water lilies strewn about, the costly ornamental pennants and banners, the sprinkling of sandalwood water and the crowds of freshly bathed people. Seeing a nursemaid standing nearby, Mánthara asked, "Why is Rama's mother so delighted and giving away money to people, when she has always been so miserly? Tell me, why are the people displaying such boundless delight? Has something happened to delight the lord of earth? What is he planning to do?" Bursting with delight and out of sheer gladness the nursemaid told the hunchback Mánthara about the greater majesty in store for Rághava: "Tomorrow on Pushya day King Dasha·ratha is going to consecrate Rama Rághava as prince regent, the blameless prince who has mastered his anger."

When she heard what the nursemaid said, the hunchback was furious and descended straightway from the terrace that was like the peak of Mount Kailása. Consumed with rage, the malevolent Mánthara approached Kaikéyi as she lay upon her couch, and she said: "Get up, you foolish woman! How can you lie there when danger is threatening you? Don't you realize that a flood of misery is about to overwhelm you? Your beautiful face has lost its charm. You boast of the power of your beauty, but it has proved to be as fleeting as a river's current in the hot season." So she spoke, and Kaikéyi was deeply distraught at the bitter words of the angry, malevolent hunchback. "Mánthara," she replied, "is

Kaikeyī tv abravīt kubjāṃ: «kaccit kṣemaṃ na Manthare?
viṣaṇṇa|vadanāṃ hi tvāṃ lakṣaye bhṛśa|duḥkhitām.»

Mantharā tu vacaḥ śrutvā Kaikeyyā madhur'|âkṣaram
uvāca krodha|saṃyuktā vākyaṃ vākya|viśāradā.
7.15 Sā viṣaṇṇatarā bhūtvā kubjā tasyā hit'|âiṣiṇī
viṣādayantī provāca bhedayantī ca Rāghavam:
«Akṣemaṃ sumahad devi pravṛttaṃ tvad|vināśanam
Rāmaṃ Daśaratho rājā yauvarājye 'bhiṣekṣyati.
S" âsmy agādhe bhaye magnā duḥkha|śoka|samanvitā
dahyamān" ânalen' êva tvadd hit'|ârtham ih' āgatā.
Tava duḥkhena Kaikeyi mama duḥkhaṃ mahad bhavet
tvad|vṛddhau mama vṛddhiś ca bhaved atra na saṃśayaḥ.
Nar'|âdhipa|kule jātā mahiṣī tvaṃ mahī|pateḥ
ugratvaṃ rāja|dharmāṇāṃ kathaṃ devi na budhyase?
7.20 Dharma|vādī śaṭho bhartā ślakṣṇa|vādī ca dāruṇaḥ
śuddha|bhāve na jānīṣe ten' âivam atisaṃdhitā.
Upasthitaṃ prayuñjānas tvayi sāntvam an|arthakam
arthen' âiv' âdya te bhartā Kausalyāṃ yojayiṣyati.
Apavāhya sa duṣṭ'|ātmā Bharataṃ tava bandhuṣu
kālyaṃ sthāpayitā Rāmaṃ rājye nihata|kaṇṭake.
Śatruḥ pati|pravādena mātr" êva hitakāmyayā
āśīviṣa iv' âṅkena bāle paridhṛtas tvayā.
Yathā hi kuryāt sarpo vā śatrur vā pratyupekṣitaḥ
rājñā Daśarathen' âdya saputrā tvaṃ tathā kṛtā.

something wrong? I can tell by the distress in your face how sorely troubled you are."

Hearing Kaikéyi's gentle words the wrathful Mánthara spoke—and a very clever speaker she was. The hunchback 7.15
grew even more distraught, and, with Kaikéyi's best interests at heart, spoke out, trying to sharpen her distress and turn her against Rághava: "Something is very seriously wrong, my lady, something that threatens to ruin you. For King Dasha·ratha is going to consecrate Rama as prince regent. I felt myself sinking down into unfathomable danger, stricken with grief and sorrow, burning as if on fire. And so I have come here, with your best interests at heart. When you are sorrowful, Kaikéyi, I am too, and even more, and, when you prosper, so do I. There is not the slightest doubt of this. You were born into a family of kings, you are a queen of the lord of earth. My lady, how can you fail to know that the ways of kings are ruthless?

Your husband talks of righteousness, but he is deceiving 7.20
you; his words are gentle but he is cruel. You are too innocent to understand, and so he has utterly defrauded you like this. When expedient, your husband reassures you, but it is all worthless. Now that there is something of real worth he is ready to bestow it upon Kausálya. Having got Bhárata out of the way by sending him off to your family, the wicked man shall tomorrow establish Rama in unchallenged kingship. He is an enemy pretending to be your husband. He is like a viper, child, whom you have taken to your bosom and lovingly mothered. For what an enemy or a snake would do if one ignored them, King Dasha·ratha is now doing to

7.25 Pāpen' ânṛta|sāntvena bāle nityaṃ sukh'|ôcite
Rāmaṃ sthāpayatā rājye s'|ânubandhā hatā hy asi.
Sā prāpta|kālaṃ Kaikeyi kṣipraṃ kuru hitaṃ tava.
trāyasva putram ātmānaṃ māṃ ca vismaya|darśane.»
Mantharāyā vacaḥ śrutvā śayanāt sā śubh'|ānanā
evam ābharaṇaṃ tasyai kubjāyai pradadau śubham.
Dattvā tv ābharaṇaṃ tasyai kubjāyai pramad'|ôttamā
Kaikeyī Mantharāṃ hṛṣṭā punar ev' âbravīd idam:
«Idaṃ tu Manthare mahyam ākhyāsi paramaṃ priyam.
etan me priyam ākhyātuḥ kiṃ vā bhūyaḥ karomi te?
7.30 Rāme vā Bharate v" âhaṃ viśeṣaṃ n' ôpalakṣaye
tasmāt tuṣṭ" âsmi yad rājā Rāmaṃ rājye 'bhiṣekṣyati.
Na me paraṃ kiṃ cid itas tvayā punaḥ
priyaṃ priy'|ârhe suvacaṃ vaco varam.
tathā hy avocas tvam ataḥ priy'|ôttaraṃ
varaṃ paraṃ te pradadāmi taṃ vṛṇu!»

8.1 MANTHARĀ TV ABHYASŪY' ÂINĀM
utsṛjy' ābharaṇaṃ ca tat
uvāc' êdaṃ tato vākyaṃ
kopa|duḥkha|samanvitā:
«Harṣaṃ kim idam asthāne kṛtavaty asi bāliśe?
śoka|sāgara|madhyastham ātmānaṃ n' âvabudhyase?
Subhagā khalu Kausalyā yasyāḥ putro 'bhiṣekṣyate
yauvarājyena mahatā śvaḥ Puṣyeṇa dvij'|ôttamaiḥ.

you and your son. The man is evil, his assurances false, and, 7.25
by establishing Rama in the kingship, dear child who has always known comfort, he will bring ruin upon you and your family. Kaikéyi, the time has come to act, and you must act swiftly, for your own good. You must save your son, yourself and me, my enchanting beauty."

After listening to Mánthara's speech, the lovely woman rose from the couch and presented the hunchback with a lovely piece of jewelry. And, when she had given the hunchback the jewelry, Kaikéyi, most beautiful of women, said in delight to Mánthara: "What you have reported to me is the most wonderful news. How else may I reward you, Mánthara, for reporting such good news to me? I draw 7.30
no distinction between Rama and Bhárata, and so I am perfectly content that the king should consecrate Rama as king. You could not possibly tell me better news than this, or speak more welcome words, my well-deserving woman. For what you have told me I will give you yet another boon, something you might like more—just choose it!"

But Mánthara was beside herself with rage and sor- 8.1
row. She threw the jewelry away and said spitefully: "You foolish woman, how can you be delighted at such a moment? Are you not aware that you stand in the midst of a sea of grief? It is Kausálya who is fortunate; it is her son the eminent *brahman*s will consecrate as the powerful prince regent tomorrow, on Pushya day. Once Kausálya secures this great object of joy, she will cheerfully eliminate her enemies. And you will have to wait on her with hands cupped

Prāptāṃ sumahatīṃ prītiṃ pratītāṃ tāṃ hata|dviṣam
upasthāsyasi Kausalyāṃ dās" îva tvaṃ kṛt'|âñjaliḥ.
Hṛṣṭāḥ khalu bhaviṣyanti Rāmasya paramāḥ striyaḥ
aprahṛṣṭā bhaviṣyanti snuṣās te Bharata|kṣaye.»

Tāṃ dṛṣṭvā parama|prītāṃ bruvantīṃ Mantharāṃ tataḥ
Rāmas' âiva guṇān devī Kaikeyī praśaśaṃsa ha:
«Dharmajño gurubhir dāntaḥ kṛtajñaḥ satya|vāk śuciḥ
Rāmo rājñaḥ suto jyeṣṭho yauvarājyam ato 'rhati.
Bhrātṝn bhṛtyāṃś ca dīrgh'|āyuḥ! pitṛvat pālayiṣyati
saṃtapyase kathaṃ kubje śrutvā Rām'|âbhiṣecanam?
Bharataś c' âpi Rāmasya dhruvaṃ varṣa|śatāt param
pitṛ|paitāmahaṃ rājyam avāpsyati nara|ṛṣabhaḥ.
Sā tvam abhyudaye prāpte vartamāne ca Manthare
bhaviṣyati ca kalyāṇe kim|arthaṃ paritapyase?
Kausalyāto 'tiriktaṃ ca sa tu śuśrūṣate hi mām.»

Kaikeyyā vacanaṃ śrutvā Mantharā bhṛśa|duḥkhitā
dīrgham uṣṇaṃ viniḥśvasya Kaikeyīm idam abravīt:
«An|artha|darśinī maurkhyān n' ātmānam avabudhyase
śoka|vyasana|vistīrṇe majjantī duḥkhasāgare.
Bhavitā Rāghavo rājā Rāghavasya ca yaḥ sutaḥ
rāja|vaṃśāt tu Bharataḥ Kaikeyi parihāsyate.
Na hi rājñaḥ sutāḥ sarve rājye tiṣṭhanti bhāmini
sthāpyamāneṣu sarveṣu sumahān anayo bhavet.
Tasmāj jyeṣṭhe hi Kaikeyi rājya|tantrāṇi pārthivāḥ
sthāpayanty an|avady'|âṅgi guṇavatsv itareṣv api.
Asāv atyanta|nirbhagnas tava putro bhaviṣyati
a|nāthavat sukhebhyaś ca rāja|vaṃśāc ca vatsale.

in reverence, like a serving woman. Delight is truly in store for Rama's exalted women, and all that is in store for your daughters-in-law is misery, at Bhárata's downfall."

Seeing how deeply distressed Mánthara was as she spoke, Queen Kaikéyi began to extol Rama's virtues: "Rama knows what is right, his *guru*s have taught him self-restraint. He is grateful, truthful and honest, and as the king's eldest son he deserves to be prince regent. He will protect his brothers and his dependents like a father; and long may he live! How can you be upset, hunchback, at learning of Rama's consecration? Surely Bhárata as well, the bull among men, will obtain the kingship of his fathers and forefathers after Rama's one hundred years. Why should you be upset, Mánthara, when we have prospered in the past, and prosper now, and shall have good fortune in the future? For he obeys me even more scrupulously than he does Kausálya."

When she heard what Kaikéyi said, Mánthara was still more sorely troubled. She heaved a long and hot sigh and then replied: "You are too simpleminded to see what is good for you and what is not. You are not aware that you are sinking in an ocean of sorrow fraught with disaster and grief. Rághava will be king, Kaikéyi, and then the son of Rághava, while Bhárata will be debarred from the royal succession altogether. For not all the sons of a king stand in line for the kingship, my lovely. Were all of them to be so placed, grave misfortune would ensue. That is why kings place the powers of kingship in the hands of the eldest, faultless Kaikéyi, however worthy the others. Like a helpless boy that son of yours, the object of all your motherly love,

S” âhaṃ tvad|arthe saṃprāptā
tvaṃ tu māṃ n’ âvabudhyase
sapatni|vṛddhau yā me tvaṃ
pradeyaṃ dātum icchasi!
Dhruvaṃ tu Bharataṃ Rāmaḥ prāpya rājyam akaṇṭakam
deś’|ântaraṃ nāyayitvā lok’|ântaram ath’ âpi vā!
Bāla eva hi mātulyaṃ Bharato nāyitas tvayā
saṃnikarṣāc ca sauhārdaṃ jāyate sthāvareṣv api.
Goptā hi Rāmaṃ Saumitrir Lakṣmaṇaṃ c’ âpi Rāghavaḥ
aśvinor iva saubhrātraṃ tayor lokeṣu viśrutam.
Tasmān na Lakṣmaṇe Rāmaḥ pāpaṃ kiṃ cit kariṣyati
Rāmas tu Bharate pāpaṃ kuryād iti na saṃśayaḥ.
Tasmād Rājagṛhād eva vanaṃ gacchatu te sutaḥ.
etadd hi rocate mahyaṃ bhṛśaṃc’ âpi hitaṃ tava.
Evaṃ te jñātipakṣasya śreyaś c’ âiva bhaviṣyati
yadi ced Bharato dharmāt pitryaṃ rājyam avāpsyati.
Sa te sukh’|ôcito bālo Rāmasya sahajo ripuḥ
samṛdh’|ârthasya naṣṭ’|ârtho jīviṣyati kathaṃ vaśe?
Abhidrutam iv’ âraṇye siṃhena gaja|yūthapam
pracchādyamānaṃ Rāmeṇa Bharataṃ trātum arhasi.
Darpān nirākṛtā pūrvaṃ tvayā saubhāgyavattayā
Rāma|mātā sapatnī te kathaṃ vairaṃ na yātayet?
Yadā hi Rāmaḥ pṛthivīm avāpsyati
dhruvaṃ pranaṣṭo Bharato bhaviṣyati
ato hi saṃcintaya rājyam ātmaje
parasya c’ âdy’ âiva vivāsa kāraṇam.»

will be totally excluded from the royal succession and from its pleasures as well.

Here I am, come on your behalf, but you pay me no heed. Instead, you want to reward me in token of your rival's good luck! Surely once Rama secures unchallenged kingship he will have Bhárata sent off to some other country—if not to the other world! And you had to send Bhárata, a mere boy, off to your brother's, though knowing full well that proximity breeds affection, even in insentient things. Now Rághava will protect Lákshmana, just as Saumítri will protect Rama, for their brotherly love is as celebrated as that of the Ashvins. And so Rama will do no harm to Lákshmana, but he will to Bhárata without question.

So let your son go straight from Raja-griha to the forest. That is the course I favor, and it is very much in your own best interests. For in this way good fortune may still befall your side of the family—if, that is, Bhárata secures, as by rights he should, the kingship of his forefathers. Your child has known only comfort, and, at the same time, he is Rama's natural enemy. How could the one, with his fortunes lost, live under the sway of the other, whose fortunes are thriving? Like the leader of an elephant herd attacked by a lion in the forest, your son is about to be set upon by Rama, and you must save him. Then, too, because of your beauty's power you used to spurn your co-wife, Rama's mother, so proudly. How could she fail to repay that enmity? When Rama secures control of the land, Bhárata will be lost for certain. You must therefore devise some way of making your son the king and banishing his enemy this very day."

9.1 Evam uktā tu Kaikeyī krodhena jvalit'|ānanā
dīrgham uṣṇaṃ viniḥśvasya Mantharām idam abravīt:
«Adya Rāmam itaḥ kṣipraṃ vanaṃ prasthāpayāmy aham
yauvarājyena Bharataṃ kṣipram ev' âbhiṣecaye.
Idaṃ tv idānīṃ saṃpaśya ken' ôpāyena Manthare:
Bharataḥ prāpnuyād rājyaṃ na tu Rāmaḥ kathaṃ cana?»

Evam uktā tayā devyā Mantharā pāpa|darśinī
Rām'|ârtham upahiṃsantī Kaikeyīm idam abravīt:
9.5 «Hant' êdānīṃ pravakṣyāmi Kaikeyi śrūyatāṃ ca me
yathā te Bharato rājyaṃ putraḥ prāpsyati kevalam.»
Śrutv" âivaṃ vacanaṃ tasyā Mantharāyās tu Kaikayī
kiṃ cid utthāya śayanāt sv'|āstīrṇād idam abravīt:
«Kathaya tvaṃ mam' ôpāyaṃ ken' ôpāyena Manthare!
Bharataḥ prāpnuyād rājyaṃ na tu Rāmaḥ kathaṃ cana?»

Evam uktā tayā devyā Mantharā pāpa|darśinī
Rām"|ârtham upahiṃsantī kubjā vacanam abravīt:
«Tava dev'|âsure yuddhe saha rāja|ṛṣibhiḥ patiḥ
agacchat tvām upādāya deva|rājasya sāhyakṛt
9.10 Diśam āsthāya Kaikeyi dakṣiṇāṃ Daṇḍakān prati
Vaijayantam iti khyātaṃ puraṃ yatra Timidhvajaḥ
Sa Śambara iti khyātaḥ śata|māyo mah"|âsuraḥ
dadau Śakrasya saṃgrāmaṃ deva|saṃghair anirjitaḥ.
Tasmin mahati saṃgrāme rājā Daśarathas tadā
apavāhya tvayā devi saṃgrāmān naṣṭa|cetanaḥ
Tatr' âpi vikṣataḥ śastraiḥ patis te rakṣitas tvayā
tuṣṭena tena dattau te dvau varau śubha|darśane.
Sa tvay" ôktaḥ patir devi: ‹yad" êccheyaṃ tadā varau
gṛhṇīyām iti› tat tena tath" êty uktaṃ mah"|ātmanā.

So Mánthara spoke, and Kaikéyi, her face glowing with 9.1
rage, heaved a long and burning sigh and said to her: "Today, at once, I will have Rama banished to the forest, and at once have Bhárata consecrated as prince regent. But now, Mánthara, think: In what way can Bhárata, and not Rama, secure the kingship?"

So Queen Kaikéyi spoke, and the malevolent Mánthara answered her, to the ruin of Rama's fortunes: "Well, then, 8.5
I shall tell you, Kaikéyi—and pay close attention—how your son Bhárata may secure sovereign kingship." Hearing Mánthara's words, Kaikéyi half rose from her sumptuous couch and exclaimed: "Tell me the way, Mánthara! How can Bhárata, and not Rama, secure the kingship?"

So the queen spoke, and the malevolent hunchback answered her, to the ruin of Rama's fortunes: "When the gods and *ásuras* were at war, your husband went with the royal seers to lend assistance to the king of the gods, and he took you along. He set off toward the south, Kaikéyi, to the 9.10
Dándakas and the city called Vaijayánta. It was there that Timi·dhvaja ruled, the same who is called Shámbara, a great *ásura* of a hundred magic powers. He had given battle to Shakra, and the host of gods could not conquer him. In the great battle that followed, King Dasha·ratha was struck unconscious, and you, my lady, conveyed him out of battle. But there, too, your husband was wounded by weapons, and once again you saved him, my lovely. And so in his gratitude he granted you two boons. Then, my lady, you said to your husband, 'I shall choose my two boons when I want them,' and the great king consented. I myself was unaware of this, my lady, until you yourself told me, long ago.

an|abhijñā hy ahaṃ devi tvay” âiva kathitaṃ purā
Tau varau yāca bhartāraṃ: Bharatasy’ âbhiṣecanam
pravrājanaṃ ca Rāmasya tvaṃ varṣāṇi catur|daśa.

Krodh’|āgāraṃ praviśy’ âdya kruddh” êv’ âśvapateḥ sute
śeṣv’ ânantarhitāyāṃ tvaṃ bhūmau malina|vāsinī
mā sm’ âinaṃ pratyudīkṣethā mā c’ âinam abhibhāṣathāḥ.
Dayitā tvaṃ sadā bhartur atra me n’ âsti saṃśayaḥ
tvat|kṛte ca mahā|rājo viśed api hut’|âśanam.
Na tvāṃ krodhayituṃ śakto na kruddhāṃ pratyudīkṣitum
tava priy’|ârthaṃ rājā hi prāṇān api parityajet.
Na hy atikramituṃ śaktas tava vākyaṃ mahī|patiḥ
manda|svabhāve budhyasva saubhāgya|balam ātmanaḥ.
Maṇi|muktā|suvarṇāni ratnāni vividhāni ca
dadyād Daśaratho rājā mā sma teṣu manaḥ kṛthāḥ.
Yau tau dev’|âsure yuddhe varau Daśaratho ’dadāt.
tau smāraya mahā|bhāge so ’rtho mā tvām atikramet.

Yadā tu te varaṃ dadyāt svayam utthāpya Rāghavaḥ
vyavasthāpya mahā|rājaṃ tvam imaṃ vṛṇuyā varam:
‹Rāmaṃ pravrājay’ âraṇye nava varṣāṇi pañca ca
Bharataḥ kriyatāṃ rājā pṛthivyāṃ pārthiva|ṛṣabhaḥ.›
Evaṃ pravrājitaś c’ âiva Rāmo ‹’rāmo› bhaviṣyati
Bharataś ca hat’|âmitras tava rājā bhaviṣyati.
Yena kālena Rāmaś ca vanāt pratyāgamiṣyati
tena kālena putras te kṛta|mūlo bhaviṣyati.
saṃgṛhīta|manuṣyaś ca suhṛdbhiḥ sārdham ātmavān.
Prāpta|kālaṃ tu te manye rājānaṃ vīta|sādhvasā.
Rām’|âbhiṣeka|saṃkalpān nigṛhya vinivartaya.»

You must now demand these two boons of your husband: the consecration of Bhárata and the banishment of Rama for fourteen years.

Now go into your private chamber, daughter of Ashva·pati, as if in a fit of rage. Put on a dirty garment, lie down on the bare ground, and don't speak to him, don't even look at him. Your husband has always adored you, I haven't any doubt of it. For your sake the great king would even go through fire. The king could not bring himself to anger you, nor even bear to look at you when you are angry. He would give up his own life to please you. The lord of the land is powerless to refuse your demand. Dull-witted girl, recognize the power of your beauty. King Dasha·ratha will offer gems, pearls, gold, a whole array of precious gifts—but pay no mind to them. Just keep reminding Dasha·ratha of those two boons he granted at the battle of the gods and *ásuras*. Illustrious lady, you must not let this opportunity pass you by.

When the great king Rághava helps you up himself and offers you a boon, then you must ask him for this one, first making sure he swears to it: 'Banish Rama to the forest for nine years and five, and make Bhárata king of the land, the bull among kings." In this way Rama will be banished and cease to be 'the pleasing prince,' and your Bhárata, his rival eliminated, will be king. And by the time Rama returns from the forest, your steadfast son and his supporters will have struck deep roots and won over the populace. I think it high time you overcame your timidity. You must forcibly prevent the king from carrying out Rama's consecration."

An|artham artha|rūpeṇa grāhitā sā tatas tayā
hṛṣṭā pratītā Kaikeyī Mantharām idam abravīt:
«Kubje tvāṃ n' âbhijānāmi
śreṣṭhāṃ śreṣṭh'|âbhidhāyinīm
pṛthivyām asi kubjānām
uttamā buddhi|niścaye.
Tvam eva tu mam' ârtheṣu nitya|yuktā hit'|âiṣiṇī
n' âhaṃ samavabudhyeyaṃ kubje rājñaś cikīrṣitam.
Santi duḥsaṃsthitāḥ kubjā vakrāḥ parama|pāpikāḥ
tvaṃ padmam iva vātena saṃnatā priya|darśanā.
Uras te 'bhiniviṣṭaṃ vai yāvat skandhāt samunnatam
adhastāc c' ôdaraṃ śātaṃ sunābham iva lajjitam.
Jaghanaṃ tava nirghuṣṭaṃ raśanā|dāma|śobhitam
jaṅghe bhṛśam upanyaste pādau c' âpy āyatāv ubhau.
Tvam āyatābhyāṃ sakthibhyāṃ Manthare kṣauma|vāsini
agrato mama gacchantī rāja|haṃsīva rājase.
Tav' êdaṃ sthagu yad dīrghaṃ rathaghoṇam iv' āyatam
matayaḥ kṣatra|vidyāś ca māyāś c' âtra vasanti te.
Atra te pratimokṣyāmi mālāṃ kubje hiraṇmayīm
abhiṣikte ca Bharate Rāghave ca vanaṃ gate.
Jātyena ca suvarṇena suniṣṭaptena sundari
labdh'|ârthā ca pratītā ca lepayiṣyāmi te sthagu.
Mukhe ca tilakaṃ citraṃ jātarūpamayaṃ śubham
kārayiṣyāmi te kubje śubhāny ābharaṇāni ca.
Paridhāya śubhe vastre deva|deva cariṣyasi
candram āhvayamānena mukhen' âpratimānanā

And so Mánthara induced her to accept such evil by disguising it as good, and Kaikéyi, now cheered and delighted, replied:

"Hunchback, I never recognized your excellence, nor how excellent your advice. Of all the hunchbacks in the land there is none better at devising plans. You are the only one who has always sought my advantage and had my interests at heart. I might never have known, hunchback, what the king intended to do. There are hunchbacks who are misshapen, crooked and hideously ugly—but not you, you are lovely, you are bent no more than a lotus in the breeze. Your chest is arched, raised as high as your shoulders, and, down below, your waist, with its lovely navel, seems as if it had grown thin in envy of it. Your girdle-belt beautifies your hips and sets them jingling. Your legs are set strong under you, while your feet are long. With your wide buttocks, Mánthara, and your garment of white linen, you are as resplendent as a wild goose when you go before me. 9.30

And this huge hump of yours, wide as the hub of a chariot wheel—your clever ideas must be stored in it, your political wisdom and magic powers. And there, hunchback, is where I will drape you with a garland made of gold, once Bhárata is consecrated and Rághava has gone to the forest. When I have accomplished my purpose, my lovely, when I am satisfied, I will anoint your hump with precious liquid gold. And for your face I will have them fashion an elaborate and beautiful forehead mark of gold and exquisite jewelry for you, hunchback. Dressed in a pair of lovely garments you shall go about like a goddess; with that face of yours that challenges the moon, peerless in visage; and you shall strut 9.35

gamiṣyasi gatiṃ mukhyāṃ garvayantī dviṣaj|janam.
Tav' âpi kubjāḥ kubjāyāḥ sarv'|ābharaṇa|bhūṣitāḥ
pādau paricariṣyanti yath" âiva tvaṃ sadā mama.»

Iti praśasyamānā sā Kaikeyīm idam abravīt
śayānāṃ śayane śubhre vedyām agni|śikhām iva:
«Gat'|ôdake setu|bandho na kalyāṇi vidhīyate
uttiṣṭha kuru kalyāṇaṃ rājānam anudarśaya!»
Tathā protsāhitā devī gatvā Mantharayā saha
krodh'|āgāraṃ viśāl'|âkṣī saubhāgya|mada|garvitā.
Aneka|śata|sāhasraṃ muktā|hāraṃ var'|âṅganā
avamucya var'|ârhāṇi śubhāny ābharaṇāni ca.
Tato hem'|ôpamā tatra kubjā vākyaṃ vaśaṃ gatā
saṃviśya bhūmau Kaikeyī Mantharām idam abravīt:
«Iha vā māṃ mṛtāṃ kubje nṛpāy' āvedayiṣyasi
vanaṃ tu Rāghave prāpte Bharataḥ prāpsyati kṣitim.»

Ath' âitad uktvā vacanaṃ su|dāruṇaṃ
nidhāya sarv'|ābharaṇāni bhāminī
asaṃvṛtām āstaraṇena medinīṃ
tad" âdhiśiśye patit" êva kinnarī.
Udīrṇa|saṃrambha|tamo|vṛt'|ānanā
tath" âvamukt'|ôttama|mālya|bhūṣaṇā
nar'|êndra|patnī vimanā babhūva sā
tamo|vṛtā dyaur iva magna|tārakā.

holding your head high before the people who hate me. You too shall have hunchbacks, adorned with every sort of ornament, to humbly serve you, hunchback, just as you always serve me."

Being flattered in this fashion, she replied to Kaikéyi, who 9.40
still lay on her luxurious couch like a flame of fire on an altar: "One does not build a dike, my precious, after the water is gone. Get up, apprise the king, and see to your own welfare!" Thus incited, the large-eyed queen went with Mánthara to her private chamber, puffed up with the intoxicating power of her beauty. There the lovely lady removed her pearl necklace, worth many hundred thousands, and her other costly and beautiful jewelry. And then, under the spell of the hunchback Mánthara's words, the golden Kaikéyi got down upon the floor and said to her: "Hunchback, 9.45
go inform the king that I will surely die right here unless Bhárata receives as his portion the land and Rághava, as his, the forest."

And, uttering these ruthless words, the lady put all her jewelry aside and lay down upon the ground bare of any spread, like a fallen *kínnara* woman. Her face enveloped in the darkness of her swollen rage, her fine garlands and ornaments stripped off, the wife of the lord of men grew distraught and took on the appearance of a darkened sky, when all the stars have set.

10.1 Ājñāpya tu mahā|rājo Rāghavasy' âbhiṣecanam
priy'|ârhāṃ priyam ākhyātuṃ viveś' ântaḥ|puraṃ vaśī.
Tāṃ tatra patitāṃ bhūmau śayānām atath"|ôcitām
pratapta iva duḥkhena so 'paśyaj jagatī|patiḥ.
Sa vṛddhas taruṇīṃ bhāryāṃ prāṇebhyo 'pi garīyasīm
apāpaḥ pāpa|saṃkalpāṃ dadarśa dharaṇī|tale.
Kareṇum iva digdhena viddhāṃ mṛgayuṇā vane
mahā|gaja iv' âraṇye snehāt parimamarśa tām.
10.5 Parimṛśya ca pāṇibhyām abhisaṃtrasta|cetanaḥ
kāmī kamala|patr'|âkṣīm uvāca vanitām idam:
«Na te 'ham abhijānāmi krodham ātmani saṃśritam
devi ken' âbhiyukt" âsi? kena v" âsi vimānitā?
Yad idaṃ mama duḥkhāya śeṣe kalyāṇi pāṃsuṣu
bhūmau śeṣe kim|arthaṃ tvaṃ mayi kalyāṇa cetasi?
bhūt'|ôpahata|citt" êva mama citta|pramāthinī
Santi me kuśalā vaidyā abhituṣṭāś ca sarvaśaḥ
sukhitāṃ tvāṃ kariṣyanti vyādhim ācakṣva bhāmini
Kasya vā te priyaṃ kāryaṃ? kena vā vipriyaṃ kṛtam?
kaḥ priyaṃ labhatām adya? ko vā sumahad apriyam?
10.10 Avadhyo vadhyatāṃ ko vā vadhyaḥ ko vā vimucyatām?
daridraḥ ko bhavatv āḍhyo? dravyavān v" âpy akiṃcanaḥ?
Ahaṃ c' âiva madīyāś ca sarve tava vaś'|ânugāḥ.
na te kaṃ cid abhiprāyaṃ vyāhantum aham utsahe.
Ātmano jīviten' âpi brūhi yan manas" êcchasi
yāvad āvartate cakraṃ tāvatī me vasuṃ|dharā.»

Now, when the great king had given orders for Rágha- 10.1
va's consecration, he gladly entered the inner chamber to tell his beloved wife the good news. But when the lord of the world saw her fallen on the ground and lying there in a posture so ill-befitting her, he was consumed with sorrow. The guileless old man saw her on the floor, that guileful young wife of his, who meant more to him than life itself. He began to caress her affectionately, as a great bull elephant in the wilderness might caress his cow wounded by the poisoned arrow of a hunter lurking in the forest. And, as he 10.5
caressed his lotus-eyed wife with his hands, sick with worry and desire, he said to her:

"I do not understand, my lady, why you should be angry. Has someone offended you, or shown you disrespect, that you should lie here in the dust, my precious, and cause me such sorrow? What reason have you to lie upon the floor as if possessed by a spirit, driving me to distraction, when you are so precious to me? I have skilled physicians, who have been gratified in every way. They will make you well again. Tell me what hurts you, my lovely. Is there someone to whom you would have favor shown, or has someone aroused your disfavor? The one shall find favor at once, the other incur my lasting disfavor. Is there some guilty man who should be 10.10
freed, or some innocent man I should execute? What poor man should I enrich, what rich man impoverish? I and my people, we all bow to your will. I could not bring myself to thwart any wish of yours, not if it cost me my life. Tell me what your heart desires, for all the earth belongs to me, as far as the wheel of my power reaches."

Tath" ôktā sā samāśvastā vaktukāmā tad apriyam
paripīḍayituṃ bhūyo bhartāram upacakrame.
«N' âsmi viprakṛtā deva kena cin na vimānitā
abhiprāyas tu me kaś cit tam icchāmi tvayā kṛtam.
Pratijñāṃ pratijānīṣva yadi tvaṃ kartum icchasi
atha tad vyāhariṣyāmi yad abhiprārthitaṃ mayā.»
Evam uktas tayā rājā priyayā strī|vaśaṃ gataḥ
tām uvāca mahā|tejāḥ Kaikeyīm īṣad|utsmitaḥ:
«Avalipte na jānāsi tvattaḥ priyataro mama
manujo manuja|vyāghrād Rāmād anyo na vidyate?
Bhadre hṛdayam apy etad anumṛśy' ôddharasva me
etat samīkṣya Kaikeyi brūhi yat sādhu manyase.
Balam ātmani paśyantī na māṃ śaṅkitum arhasi
kariṣyāmi tava prītiṃ sukṛten' âpi te śape.»
Tena vākyena saṃhṛṣṭā tam abhiprāyam ātmanaḥ
vyājahāra mahā|ghoram abhyāgatam iv' ântakam:
«Yathākrameṇa śapasi varaṃ mama dadāsi ca
tac chṛṇvantu trayas|triṃśad devāḥ s'|êndra|purogamāḥ.
Candr'|ādityau nabhaś c' âiva grahā rātry|ahanī diśaḥ
jagac ca pṛthivī c' âiva sa|gandharvā sa|rākṣasā.
Niśācarāṇi bhūtāni gṛheṣu gṛha|devatāḥ
yāni c' ânyāni bhūtāni jānīyur bhāṣitaṃ tava.
Satya|saṃdho mahā|tejā dharmajñaḥ susamāhitaḥ
varaṃ mama dadāty eṣa tan me śṛṇvantu devatāḥ.»

So he spoke, and now encouraged she resolved to tell her hateful plan. She then commenced to cause her husband still greater pain. "No one has mistreated me, my lord, or shown me disrespect But there is one wish I have that I should like you to fulfill. You must first give me your promise that you are willing to do it. Then I shall reveal what it is I desire." So his beloved Kaikéyi spoke, and the mighty king, hopelessly under the woman's power, said to her with some surprise: "Do you not yet know, proud lady, that except for Rama, tiger among men, there is not a single person I love as much as you? Take hold of my heart, rip it out and examine it closely, my lovely Kaikéyi; then tell me if you do not find it true. Seeing that I have the power, you ought not to doubt me. I will do what will make you happy, I swear to you by all my acquired merit."

His words filled her with delight, and she made ready to reveal her dreadful wish, which was like a visitation of death: "Let the three and thirty gods, with Indra at their head, hear how you in due order swear an oath and grant me a boon. Let the sun and moon, the sky, the planets, night and day, the quarters of space, heaven and earth, let all the *gandhárva*s and *rákshasa*s, the spirits that stalk the night, the household gods in every house and all the other spirits take heed of what you have said. This mighty king, who is true to his word and knows the ways of righteousness, in full awareness grants me a boon—let the deities give ear to this for me."

Iti devī maheṣvāsaṃ parigṛhy' âbhiśasya ca
tataḥ param uvāc' êdaṃ varadaṃ kāma|mohitam.
«Varau yau me tvayā deva tadā dattau mahī|pate
tau tāvad aham ady' âiva vakṣyāmi śṛṇu me vacaḥ.
Abhiṣeka|samārambho Rāghavasy' ôpakalpitaḥ
anen' âiv' âbhiṣekeṇa Bharato me 'bhiṣicyatām.
Nava pañca ca varṣāṇi Daṇḍak'|âraṇyam āśritaḥ
cīr'|âjina|jaṭā|dhārī Rāmo bhavatu tāpasaḥ.
Bharato bhajatām adya yauvarājyam akaṇṭakam
adya c' âiva hi paśyeyaṃ prayāntaṃ Rāghavaṃ vane.»
Tataḥ śrutvā mahā|rāja Kaikeyyā dāruṇaṃ vacaḥ
vyathito vilavaś c' âiva vyāghrīṃ dṛṣṭvā yathā mṛgaḥ.
Asaṃvṛtāyām āsīno jagatyāṃ dīrgham ucchvasan
«aho dhig iti» s'|âmarṣo vācam uktvā nar'|âdhipaḥ.
moham āpedivān bhūyaḥ śok'|ôpahata|cetanaḥ.

Cireṇa tu nṛpaḥ saṃjñāṃ pratilabhya suduḥkhitaḥ
Kaikeyīm abravīt kruddhaḥ pradahann iva cakṣuṣā.
«Nṛśaṃse duṣṭa|cāritre kulasy' âsya vināśini!
kiṃ kṛtaṃ tava Rāmeṇa pāpe pāpaṃ may" âpi vā?
Sadā te jananī tulyāṃ vṛttiṃ vahati Rāghavaḥ
tasy' âiva tvam an|arthāya kiṃ|nimittam ih' ôdyatā?
Tvaṃ may" ātmavināśāya bhavanaṃ svaṃ praveśitā
avijñānān nṛpa|sutā vyālī tīkṣṇa|viṣā yathā.
Jīva|loko yadā sarvo Rāmasy' êha guṇa|stavam
aparādhaṃ kam uddiśya tyakṣyāmīṣṭam ahaṃ sutam?
Kausalyāṃ vā Sumitrāṃ vā tyajeyam api vā śriyam
jīvitaṃ v" ātmano Rāmaṃ na tv eva pitṛ|vatsalam.

Thus the queen ensnared the great archer and called upon witnesses. She then addressed the king, who in his mad passion had granted her a boon. "I will now claim the two boons you once granted me, my lord. Hear my words, your majesty. Let my son Bhárata be consecrated with the very rite of consecration you have prepared for Rághava. Let Rama withdraw to Dándaka wilderness and for nine years and five live the life of an ascetic, wearing hides and bark-cloth garments and matted hair. Let Bhárata today become the uncontested prince regent, and let me see Rághava depart this very day for the forest." When the great king heard Kaikéyi's ruthless demands, he was shaken and unnerved, like a stag at the sight of a tigress. The lord of men gasped as he sank down upon the bare floor. "Oh damn you!" he cried in uncontrollable fury before he fell into a stupor, his heart crushed by grief.

Gradually the king regained his senses and then, in bitter sorrow and anger, he spoke to Kaikéyi, with fire in his eyes: "Malicious, wicked woman, bent on destroying this House! Evil woman, what evil did Rama or I ever do to you? Rághava has always treated you just like his own mother. What reason can you have for trying to wreck his fortunes, of all people? It was sheer suicide to bring you into my home. I did it unwittingly, thinking you a princess—and not a deadly poisonous viper. When praise for Rama's virtues is on the lips of every living soul, what crime could I adduce as pretext for renouncing my favorite son? I would sooner renounce Kausálya, or Sumítra, or sovereignty, or life itself, than Rama, who so cherishes his father.

Parā bhavati me prītir dṛṣṭvā tanayam agrajam
apaśyatas tu me Rāmaṃ naṣṭā bhavati cetanā.
Tiṣṭhel loko vinā sūryaṃ sasyaṃ vā salilaṃ vinā
na tu Rāmaṃ vinā dehe tiṣṭhet tu mama jīvitam.
Tad alaṃ tyajyatām eṣa niścayaḥ pāpa|niścaye!
api te caraṇau mūrdhnā spṛśāmy eṣa prasīda me?»
Sa bhūmi|pālo vilapann a|nāthavat
striyā gṛhīto hṛhaye 'timātratā
papāta devyāś caraṇau prasāritāv
ubhāv asaṃspṛśya yath" āturas tathā.

ATAD|ARHAṂ MAHĀ|RĀJAṂ śayānam atath"|ôcitam
Yayātim iva puṇy'|ânte deva|lokāt paricyutam.
An|artha|rūpā siddh'|ârthā abhītā bhaya|darśinī
punar ākārayām āsa tam eva varam aṅganā.
«Tvaṃ katthyase mahā|rāja satya|vādī dṛḍha|vrataḥ
mama c' êmaṃ varaṃ kasmād vidhārayitum icchasi?»
Evam uktas tu Kaikeyyā rājā Daśarathas tadā
pratyuvāca tataḥ kruddho muhūrtaṃ vihvalann iva:
«Mṛte mayi! gate Rāme vanaṃ manuja|puṃgave
hant' ânārye mam' âmitre Rāmaḥ pravrājito vanam?
Yadi satyaṃ bravīmy etat tad asatyaṃ bhaviṣyati
akīrtir atulā loke dhruvaṃ paribhavaś ca me.»

The greatest joy I know is seeing my firstborn son. If I cannot see Rama, I shall lose my mind. The world might endure without the sun, or crops without water, but without Rama life could not endure within my body. Enough, then, 10.40
give up this scheme, you evil-scheming woman. I beg you! Must I get down and bow my head to your feet?" His heart in the grip of a woman who knew no bounds, the guardian of the earth began helplessly to cry, and as the queen extended her feet he tried in vain to touch them, and collapsed like a man on the point of death.

THE KING LAY THERE, in so unaccustomed a posture, so 11.1
ill-befitting his dignity, like Yayáti himself, his merit exhausted, fallen from the world of the gods. But the woman was unafraid, for all the fear she awoke. She was misfortune incarnate and had yet to secure her fortunes. Once more she tried to force him to fulfill the boon. "You are vaunted, great king, as a man true to his word and firm in his vows. How then can you be prepared to withhold my boon?" So Kaikéyi spoke, and King Dasha·ratha, faltering for a moment, angrily replied: "Vile woman, mortal enemy! Will 11.5
you not be happy, will you not be satisfied until you see me dead, and Rama, the bull among men, gone to the forest? To satisfy Kaikéyi Rama must be banished to the forest, but if I keep my word in this, then I must be guilty of another lie. My infamy will be unequalled in the eyes of the people and my disgrace inevitable."

Tathā vilapatas tasya paribhramita|cetasaḥ
astam abhyagamat sūryo rajanī c' âbhyavartata.
Sa tri|yāmā tath" ārtasya candra|maṇḍala|maṇḍitā
rājño vilapamānasya na vyabhāsata śarvarī.
Tath" âiv' ôṣṇaṃ viniḥśvasya vṛddho Daśaratho nṛpaḥ
vilalāp' ārtavad duḥkhaṃ gagan'|āsakta|locanaḥ.
«Na prabhātaṃ tvay" êcchāmi may" âyaṃ racito 'ñjaliḥ
atha vā gamyatāṃ śīghraṃ n' âham icchāmi nirghṛṇām
nṛśaṃsāṃ Kaikeyīṃ draṣṭuṃ yat|kṛte vyasanaṃ mahat.»

Evam uktvā tato rājā Kaikeyīṃ saṃyat'|âñjaliḥ
prasādayām āsa punaḥ Kaikeyīṃ c' êdam abravīt:
«Sādhu vṛddhasya dīnasya tvad|gatasya gat'|āyuṣaḥ
prasādaḥ kriyatāṃ devi bhadre rājño viśeṣataḥ.
Śūnyena khalu suśroṇi may" êdaṃ samudāhṛtam
kuru sādhu prasādaṃ me bāle sahṛdayā hy asi.»
Viśuddha|bhāvasya hi duṣṭa|bhāvā
tāmr'|ēkṣaṇasy' âśru|kalasya rājñaḥ
śrutvā vicitraṃ karuṇaṃ vilāpaṃ
bhartur nṛśaṃsā na cakāra vākyam.
Tataḥ sa rājā punar eva mūrchitaḥ
priyām atuṣṭāṃ pratikūla|bhāṣiṇīm
samīkṣya putrasya vivāsanaṃ prati
kṣitau visaṃjño nipapāta duḥkhitaḥ.

Putra|śok'|ârditaṃ pāpā visaṃjñaṃ patitaṃ bhuvi
viveṣṭamānam udīkṣya s" Āikṣvākam idam abravīt:

While he was lamenting like this, his mind in a whirl, the sun set and evening came on. To the anguished king lost in lamentation, the night, adorned with the circlet of the moon, no longer seemed to last a mere three watches. Heaving burning sighs, aged King Dasha·ratha sorrowfully lamented in his anguish, his eyes fixed upon the sky. "I do 11.10
not want you to bring the dawn—here, I cup my hands in supplication. But no, pass as quickly as you can, so that I no longer have to see this heartless, malicious Kaikéyi, the cause of this great calamity."

But, with this, the king cupped his hands before Kaikéyi and once more, begging her mercy, he spoke: "Please, I am an old man, my life is nearly over. I am desolate, I place myself in your hands. Dear lady, have mercy on me for, after all, I am king. Truly it was thoughtless of me, my fair-hipped lady, to have said those things just now. Have mercy on me, please, my child. I know you have a heart." So the pure-hearted king lamented, frantically and piteously, his eyes reddened and dimmed by tears, but the malicious, blackhearted woman only listened and made no reply. And 11.15
as the king stared at the woman he loved but could not appease, whose demand was so perverse—for the exile of his own son—he once again was taken faint, overcome with grief, and dropped unconscious to the floor.

THE EVIL WOMAN watched as Aikshváka lay writhing 12.1
unconscious on the ground where he had fallen, tortured with grief for his son. Then she spoke:

«Pāpaṃ kṛtv" êva kim idaṃ mama saṃśrutya saṃśravam
śeṣe kṣiti|tale sannaḥ sthityāṃ sthātuṃ tvam arhasi?
Āhuḥ satyaṃ hi paramaṃ dharmaṃ dharmavido janāḥ
satyam āśritya hi mayā tvaṃ ca dharmaṃ pracoditaḥ.
Saṃśrutya Śaibyaḥ śyenāya svāṃ tanuṃ jagatī|patiḥ
pradāya pakṣiṇo rājañ jagāma gatim uttamām.
Tathā hy Alarkas tejasvī brāhmaṇe veda|pārage
yācamāne svake netre uddhṛty' âvimanā dadau.
Saritāṃ tu patiḥ svalpāṃ maryādāṃ satyam anvitaḥ
saty'|ânurodhāt samayaṃ velāṃ khāṃ n' âtivartate,
Samayaṃ ca mam' āry' êmaṃ yadi tvaṃ na kariṣyasi
agratas te parityaktā parityakṣyāmi jīvitam.»

Evaṃ pracodito rājā Kaikeyyā nirviśaṅkayā
n' âśakat pāśam unmoktuṃ Balir indra|kṛtaṃ yathā.
Udbhrānta|hṛdayaś c' âpi vivarṇa|vadano 'bhavat
sa dhuryo vai parispandan yuga|cakr'|ântaraṃ yathā.
Vihvalābhyāṃ ca netrābhyām apaśyann iva bhūmipaḥ
kṛcchrād dhairyeṇa saṃstabhya Kaikeyīm idam abravīt:
«Yas te mantra|kṛtaḥ pāṇir agnau pāpe mayā dhṛtaḥ
taṃ tyajāmi svajaṃ c' âiva tava putraṃ saha tvayā.»

"How can you collapse like this and lie upon the floor, as though you deemed it a sin to fulfill the promise you made me? You must stand by your obligation. For people who understand the meaning of righteousness hold truth to be its essence. Now, I am simply appealing to truth and exhorting you to do what is right. Shaibya, the lord of the world, once promised his very own body to a hawk, and he actually gave it to the bird, your majesty, thereby attaining the highest goal. The same was true of mighty Alárka. When 12.5
a *brahman* versed in the Vedas begged him for his eyes, he plucked them out, his own two eyes, and gave them unflinchingly. The ocean, lord of rivers, respects the truth, keeping his narrow limits, and in accordance with the truth does not transgress the shore he pledged to keep. If you do not make good this pledge to me, my noble husband, then right before your eyes I will abandon my life, as you have abandoned me."

So the shameless Kaikéyi pressed the king, and he could no more free himself from her snare than Bali could from Indra's. His heart began to beat wildly, his face was drained of color, he was like an ox struggling between the yoke and wheels. His eyes so clouded he could hardly see, barely 12.10
steadying himself by an act of will, the lord of earth said to Kaikéyi: "Once, in accordance with the sacred hymn, I took and held your hand in mine before the marriage fire. I now repudiate you, evil woman, as well as the son I fathered on you."

Tataḥ pāpa|samācārā Kaikeyī pārthivaṃ punaḥ
uvāca paruṣaṃ vākyaṃ vākyajñā roṣa|mūrchitā.
«Kim idaṃ bhāṣase rājan vākyaṃ gara|ruj'|ôpamam?
ānāyayitum akliṣṭaṃ putraṃ Rāmam ih' ârhasi.
Sthāpya rājye mama sutaṃ kṛtvā Rāmaṃ vane|caram
niḥsapatnāṃ ca māṃ kṛtvā kṛta|kṛtyo bhaviṣyasi.»
Sa nunna iva tīkṣṇena pratodena hay'|ôttamaḥ
rājā pradocito 'bhīkṣṇaṃ Kaikeyīm idam abravīt:
«Dharma|bandhena baddho 'smi
naṣṭā ca mama cetanā!
jyeṣṭhaṃ putraṃ priyaṃ Rāmaṃ
draṣṭum icchāmi dhārmikam.»
Iti rājño vacaḥ śrutvā Kaikeyī tad|anantaram
svayam ev' âbravīt sūtaṃ: «gaccha! tvaṃ Rāmam ānaya.»
Tataḥ sa rājā taṃ sūtaṃ sanna|harṣaḥ sutaṃ prati
śok'|ārakt'|ēkṣaṇaḥ śrīmān udvīkṣy' ôvāca dhārmikaḥ.
Sumantraḥ karuṇaṃ śrutvā dṛṣṭvā dīnaṃ ca pārthivam
pragṛhīt' âñjaliḥ kiṃ cit tasmād deśād apākraman.
Yadā vaktuṃ svayaṃ dainyān na śaśāka mahī|patiḥ
tadā Sumantraṃ mantrajñā Kaikeyī pratyuvāca ha:
«Sumantra Rāmaṃ drakṣyāmi śīghram ānaya sundaram.»
sa manyamānaḥ kalyāṇaṃ hṛdayena nananda ca.

Blind with rage, the wicked Kaikéyi again addressed the king in the harshest words at her command. "What are these venomous and cutting words you are speaking? Just have your son Rama brought here without delay. Not until you have placed my son on the throne, sent Rama to live in the forest and rid me of all my rivals will you have met your obligations."

Subjected to this constant pressure, like a noble horse 12.15
prodded by a sharp goad, the king finally said: "I am bound by the bond of righteousness. My mind is failing me! I want to see righteous Rama, my beloved eldest son."

When Kaikéyi heard the king's words she immediately said to the charioteer on her own initiative, "Go! Bring Rama." Then the righteous and majestic king, utterly joyless on account of his son, looked up at the charioteer through eyes red with grief and tried to speak to him. Hearing the pitiful sound and seeing the king's desolate expression, Sumántra cupped his hands in reverence and withdrew some steps from his presence.

When in his desolation the lord of earth proved incapable 12.20
of speaking, Kaikéyi, who well knew her counsels, addressed Sumántra herself: "Sumántra, I will see Rama. Bring the handsome prince at once." Thinking this meant all was well, he rejoiced with all his heart.

Sumantraś cintayām āsa tvaritaṃ coditas tayā
«vyaktaṃ Rāmabhiṣek'|ârtham ih' āyasyati dharmavit.»
Iti sūto matiṃ kṛtvā harṣeṇa mahatā punaḥ
nirjagāma mahā|tejā Rāghavasya didṛkṣayā.
Tataḥ purastāt sahasā vinirgato
mahī|patīn dvāra|gatān vilokayan
dadarśa paurān vividhān mahā|dhanān
upasthitān dvāram upetya viṣṭhitān.

For as she pressed him to hurry Sumántra reflected, "Evidently the righteous king has exhausted himself in preparing Rama's consecration." This is what the mighty charioteer thought, and he departed in great delight, eager to see Rághava. As he rushed out he noticed first the lords of earth at the door and then saw various wealthy townsmen assembling, taking their positions before the door.

13–22
RAMA SUBMITS

13.1 Te tu tāṃ rajanīm uṣya brāhmaṇā veda|pāragāḥ
upatasthur upasthānaṃ saha|rāja|purohitāḥ.
Amātyā bala|mukhyāś ca mukhyā ye nigamasya ca
Rāghavasy' âbhiṣek'|ârthe prīyamāṇās tu saṃgatāḥ.
Udite vimale sūrye Puṣye c' âbhyāgate 'hani
abhiṣekāya Rāmasya dvij'|êndrair upakalpitam.
Kāñcanā jala|kumbhāś ca bhadra|pīṭhaṃ svalaṃkṛtam
Rāmaś ca samyag|āstīrṇo bhāsvarā vyāghra|carmaṇā
13.5 Gaṅgā|Yamunayoḥ puṇyāt saṃgamād āhṛtaṃ jalam
yāś c' ânyāḥ saritaḥ puṇyā hradāḥ kūpāḥ sarāṃsi ca
Prāg|vāhāś cordhva|vāhāś ca tiryag|vāhāḥ samāhitāḥ
tābhyaś c' âiv' āhṛtaṃ toyaṃ samudrebhyaś ca sarvaśaḥ
Kṣaudraṃ dadhi ghṛtaṃ lājā darbhāḥ sumanasaḥ payaḥ
sa|lājāḥ kṣīribhiś channā ghaṭāḥ kāñcana|rājatāḥ
padm'|ôtpala|yutā bhānti pūrṇāḥ parama|vāriṇā.

Candr'|âṃśu|vikaca|prakhyaṃ pāṇḍuraṃ ratna|bhūṣitam
sajjaṃ tiṣṭhati Rāmasya vāla|vyajanam uttamam.
Candra|maṇḍala|saṃkāśam ātapatraṃ ca pāṇḍuram
sajjaṃ dyuti|karaṃ śrīmad abhiṣeka|puras|kṛtam.
13.10 Pāṇḍuraś ca vṛṣaḥ sajjaḥ pāṇḍur'|âśvaś ca susthitaḥ
prasrutaś ca gajaḥ śrīmān aupavāhyaḥ pratīkṣate.
Aṣṭau kanyāś ca maṅgalyāḥ sarv'|ābharaṇa|bhūṣitāḥ
vāditrāṇi ca sarvāṇi bandinaś ca tath" âpare.
Ikṣvākūṇāṃ yathā rājye saṃbhriyet' âbhiṣecanam
tathā jātīyām ādāya rāja|putr'|âbhiṣecanam.
Te rāja|vacanāt tatra samavetā mahī|patim
apaśyanto 'bruvan: «ko nu rājño naḥ prativedayet?

When night was past, the *brahman*s, who were mas- 13.1
ters of the Vedas, together with the king's family priests, assembled at the assembly hall. The ministers, the leaders of the army and the leading merchants joyfully convened for Rághava's consecration. When the bright sun had risen and Pushya day had come, the chief *brahman*s made the preparations for Rama's consecration. They set out golden ewers, a richly ornamented throne, a chariot draped with a resplendent tiger skin; water brought from 13.5
the holy confluence of the Ganges and Yámuna, and from all the other holy wells, pools and lakes, from rivers flowing east, west, north and south, and from all the oceans; honey, curds, clarified butter, parched grain, *darbha* grass, flowers and milk; golden and silver pots of grain decked with sap-rich twigs, and pots brimming with pure water and adorned with lotuses and water lilies.

A splendid yak-tail fan stood ready for Rama. It was inlaid with jewels, white and softly radiant as moonbeams. A white parasol, majestic and luminous as the full moon's disk, was set out in readiness for Rama's consecration. Standing 13.10
ready were a white bull, a flawless white horse and a majestic rutting elephant, fit for a king to ride. There were eight maidens to ensure good fortune, all adorned with jewelry; all sorts of musical instruments, panegyrists and others. Bringing with them the different sorts of princely equipment required for a royal consecration of the Ikshvákus, they all convened there by order of the king. But the lord of earth was nowhere to be seen. "Who will inform the king of our arrival?" they asked. "The sun has risen and

Na paśyāmaś ca rājānam uditaś ca divākaraḥ
yauvarājy'|âbhiṣekaś ca sajjo Rāmasya dhīmataḥ.»
13.15 Iti teṣu bruvāṇeṣu sārvabhaumān mahī|patīn
abravīt tān idaṃ sarvān Sumantro rāja|sat|kṛtaḥ:
«Ayaṃ pṛcchāmi vacanāt sukham āyuṣmatām aham
rājñaḥ saṃprati buddhasya yac c' āgamana|kāraṇam.»
Ity uktv" ântaḥ|pura|dvāram ājagāma purāṇavit
āśīrbhir guṇa|yuktābhir abhituṣṭāva Rāghavam.
«Gatā bhagavatī rātrir ahaḥ śivam upasthitam
budhyasva nṛpa|śārdūla kuru kāryam anantaram.
Brāhmaṇā bala|mukhyāś ca naigamāś c' āgatā nṛpa
darśanaṃ pratikāṅkṣante pratibudhyasva Rāghava.»
13.20 Stuvantaṃ taṃ tadā sūtaṃ Sumantraṃ mantra|kovidam
pratibudhya tato rājā idaṃ vacanam abravīt:
«Na c' âiva saṃprasūto 'ham ānayed āśu Rāghavam
iti» rājā Daśarathaḥ sūtaṃ tatr' ânvaśāt punaḥ.
Sa rāja|vacanaṃ śrutvā śirasā pratipūjya tam
nirjagāma nṛp'|āvāsān manyamānaḥ priyaṃ mahat.
Prapanno rāja|mārgaṃ ca patākā|dhvaja|śobhitam
sa sūtas tatra śuśrāva Rām'|âdhikaraṇāḥ kathāḥ.
Tato dadarśa ruciraṃ Kailāsa|sadṛśa|prabham
Rāma|veśma Sumantras tu Śakra|veśma|sama|prabham.
13.25 Mahā|kapāṭa|pihitaṃ vitardi|śata|śobhitam
kāñcana|pratim'|âikāgraṃ maṇi|vidruma|toraṇam.
Śārad'|âbhra|ghana|prakhyaṃ dīptaṃ meru|guh"|ôpamam
dāmabhir vara|mālyānāṃ sumahadbhir alaṃkṛtam.
Sa vāji|yuktena rathena sārathir

wise Rama's consecration as prince regent is ready to begin, but we do not see the king."

As they were speaking, Sumántra, the honored attendant 13.15
of the king, said to all those lords of earth who had come from all over the land: "I can easily go and inquire, as my lords direct, why the king has not come out if he is now awake." With this, the master of ancient tales went to the door of the inner chamber, and there he spoke his blessings and sang the praises of Rághava's virtues. "Holy night is past, gracious day has begun. Awaken, tiger among kings, and attend forthwith to your duties. The *brahman*s, the leaders of the army and the merchants have come, your majesty. They await your presence. Awaken, Rághava." As 12.20
Sumántra, the charioteer and skilled counsellor, was singing his praises, the king became aware of him and said: "I have not been sleeping. Bring Rághava here at once." So King Dasha·ratha spoke, again ordering the charioteer. Hearing the king's command and bowing his head to him, he left the king's chamber, thinking there to be some good news.

As the charioteer entered onto the royal highway be-decked with banners and pennants, he could hear the people talking about Rama. Sumántra then saw the lovely residence of Rama, resplendent as Mount Kailása or the residence of Shakra. It was closed fast with massive gates, and adorned 13.25
with a hundred terraces. There were golden images atop its pinnacles and a gateway fashioned of gems and coral. It looked like a bank of autumn clouds, radiant as a grotto on Mount Meru, and was adorned with enormous wreaths of choice garlands. The charioteer proceeded on his horse-drawn chariot, observing the crowds that filled the great

nar'|ākulaṃ rāja|kulaṃ vilokayan
tataḥ samāsādya mahā|dhanaṃ mahat
prahṛṣṭa|romā sa babhūva sārathiḥ.
Tad adri|kūṭ'|âcala|megha|saṃnibhaṃ
mahā|vimān'|ôttama|veśma|saṃghavat
avāryamāṇaḥ praviveśa sārathiḥ
prabhūta|ratnaṃ makaro yath" ârṇavam.

14.1 Sa tad antaḥ|pura|dvāraṃ samatītya jan'|ākulam
praviviktāṃ tataḥ kakṣyām āsasāda purāṇavit.
Prāsa|kārmuka|bibhradbhir yuvabhir mṛṣṭa|kuṇḍalaiḥ
apramādibhir ek'|âgraiḥ svanuraktair adhiṣṭhitām.
Tatra kāṣāyiṇo vṛddhān vetra|pāṇīn svalaṃkṛtān
dadarśa viṣṭhitān dvāri stry|adhyakṣān susamāhitān.
Te samīkṣya samāyāntaṃ Rāma|priya|cikīrṣavaḥ
saha|bhāryāya Rāmāya kṣipram ev' âcacakṣire.
14.5 Prativeditam ājñāya sūtam abhyantaraṃ pituḥ
tatr' âiv' ānāyayām āsa Rāghavaḥ priya|kāmyayā.
Taṃ Vaiśravaṇa|saṃkāśam upaviṣṭaṃ svalaṃkṛtam
dādarśa sūtaḥ paryaṅke sauvarṇe s'|ôttara|cchade.
Varāha|rudhir'|ābheṇa śucinā ca sugandhinā
anuliptaṃ parārdhyena candanena paraṃ|tapam.
Sthitayā pārśvataś c' âpi bāla|vyajana|hastayā
upetaṃ Sītayā bhūyaś citrayā śaśinaṃ yathā
Taṃ tapantam iv' ādityam upapannaṃ sva|tejasā
vavande varadaṃ bandī niyamajño vinītavat

and opulent royal palace, and when he reached it, a shiver of delight passed through him. It resembled a mountain peak or a motionless cloud, with a complex of buildings more splendid than aerial palaces, and the charioteer made his way through it unchecked, like a dolphin through the gem-stocked sea.

THE MASTER OF ANCIENT TALES passed through the inner chamber door, where crowds of people thronged, and reached the courtyard. It was nearly empty except for the young men who stood guard, armed with bows and arrows and wearing polished earrings, wary, alert and unswervingly loyal. He saw the aged warders of the women stationed at the door. They were dressed in saffron-colored robes and richly ornamented, and stood watchfully holding their staffs. At the sight of him approaching they at once informed Rama and his wife, eager to announce the news. On receiving the message, Rághava at once had them usher in the charioteer, his father's confidant, for he was anxious for the news. The charioteer saw the slayer of enemies seated on a richly covered golden couch. He looked like Váishravana, lord of riches, in all his jewelry and with the precious sandalwood cream he had applied, red as a boar's blood, pure and fragrant. 14.1 14.5

Sita now was with him—like the star Chitra with the hare-marked moon—standing at his side with a yak-tail fan in her hand. He blazed like the sun with his natural radiance, and the charioteer greeted him, the granter of boons, with the deference in which he was practiced. His hands cupped in reverence, Sumántra, the honored attendant of the king, 14.10

Prāñjalis tu sukhaṃ pṛṣṭvā vihāra|śayan'|āsane
rāja|putram uvāc' êdaṃ Sumantro rāja|sat|kṛtaḥ
«Kausalyā suprabhā deva pitā tvaṃ draṣṭum icchati
mahiṣyā saha Kaikeyyā gamyatāṃ tatra mā ciram»

Evam uktas tu saṃhṛṣṭo nara|siṃho mahā|dyutiḥ
tataḥ saṃmānayām āsa Sītām idam uvāca ha:
«Devi devaś ca devī ca samāgamya mad|antare
mantrayete dhruvaṃ kiṃ cid abhiṣecana|saṃhitam.
Lakṣayitvā hy abhiprāyaṃ priya|kāmā sudakṣiṇā
saṃcodayati rājānaṃ mad|arthaṃ madir'|ēkṣaṇe.
Yādṛśī pariṣat tatra tādṛśo dūta āgataḥ
dhruvam ady' âiva māṃ rājā yauvarājye 'bhiṣekṣyati.
Hanta śīghram ito gatvā drakṣyāmi ca mahī|patiḥ
saha tvaṃ parivāreṇa sukham āssva ramasya ca.
Pati|saṃmānitā Sītā bhartāram asit'|ēkṣaṇā
ā|dvāram anuvavrāja maṅgalāny abhidadhyuṣī.

Sa sarvān arthino dṛṣṭvā sametya pratinandya ca
tataḥ pāvaka|saṃkāśam āruroha rath'|ôttamam.
Muṣṇantam iva cakṣūṃṣi prabhayā hema|varcasam
kareṇu|śiśu|kalpaiś ca yuktaṃ parama|vājibhiḥ.
Hari|yuktaṃ sahasr'|âkṣo ratham indra iv' āśugam
prayayau tūrṇam āsthāya Rāghavo jvalitaḥ śriyā.
Sa parjanya iv' ākāśe svanavān abhinādayan
niketān niryayau śrīmān mah"|âbhrād iva candramāḥ.
Chatra|cāmara|pāṇis tu Lakṣmaṇo Rāghav'|ânujaḥ
jugopa bhrātaraṃ bhrātā ratham āsthāya pṛṣṭhataḥ.
Tato halahalā|śabdas tumulaḥ samajāyata

asked the prince if he had passed the time agreeably, and slept and rested well. Then he said to him: "O god, worthy son of Kausálya, your father and Queen Kaikéyi wish to see you. Please go there without delay."

So he spoke, and the splendid lion among men was delighted. He dutifully assented and then said to Sita: "My lady, the king and queen must surely have met and taken some counsel on my behalf relating to the consecration. The lady is agreeable and desires to please. Having divined his intention she must be urging the king in my favor, my lovely-eyed wife. A council's mood will be reflected in the 14.15
messenger it sends. Surely the king is going to consecrate me as prince regent this very day. So, then, I will go off at once and see the lord of earth. Remain here comfortably seated with your companions, and rejoice." Dark-eyed Sita, esteemed by her lord, followed her husband as far as the door, uttering prayers for good fortune.

Catching sight of the crowds of eager people, he approached and greeted them. Then he mounted his splendid chariot, which glowed like fire. With the luster of its gleaming gold it nearly blinded the onlookers, while harnessed to it were blood horses almost the size of young elephants. As 14.20
thousand-eyed Indra boards his swift chariot with its team of bays, Rághava boarded and sped away, ablaze with royal splendor. Raising a clamor like a storm cloud rumbling in the sky, he emerged majestically from his residence like the moon from a massive cloud. Rama's younger brother Lákshmana, with a parasol and fly whisk in his hands, boarded the chariot at the rear, standing guard for his brother. As he was departing a wild cheering broke out from the flood of

tasya niṣkramamāṇasya jan'|âughasya samantataḥ.
Sa Rāghavas tatra kathā|pralāpaṃ
śuśrāva lokasya samāgatasya
ātm"|âdhikārā vividhāś ca vācaḥ
prahṛṣṭa|rūpasya pure janasya:
«Eṣa śriyaṃ gacchati Rāghavo 'dya
rāja|prasādād vipulāṃ gamiṣyan
ete vayaṃ sarva|samṛddha|kāmā
yeṣām ayaṃ no bhavitā praśāstā:
lābho janasy' âsya yad eṣa sarvaṃ
prapatsyate rāṣṭram idaṃ cirāya.»
Sa ghoṣavadbhiś ca hayaiḥ sa|nāgaiḥ
puraḥ|saraiḥ svastika|sūta|māgadhaiḥ
mahīyamānaḥ pravaraiś ca vādakair
abhiṣṭuto Vaiśravaṇo yathā yayau.
Kareṇu|mātaṅga|rath'|âśva|saṃkulaṃ
mahā|jan'|âughaiḥ paripūrṇa|catvaram
prabhūta|ratnaṃ bahu|paṇya|saṃcayaṃ
dadarśa Rāmo ruciraṃ mahā|patham.

Sa Rāmo ratham āsthāya saṃprahṛṣṭa|suhṛj|janaḥ
apaśyan nagaraṃ śrīmān nānā|jana|samākulam.
Sa gṛhair abhra|saṃkāśaiḥ pāṇḍurair upaśobhitam
rāja|mārgaṃ yayau Rāmo madhyen' âgaru|dhūpitam.
Śobhamānam asaṃbādhaṃ taṃ rāja|patham uttamam
saṃvṛtaṃ vividhaiḥ paṇyair bhakṣyair ucc'|âvacair api.
Āśīr|vādān bahūñ śṛṇvan suhṛdbhiḥ samudīritān
yath"|ârhaṃ c' âpi saṃpūjya sarvān eva narān yayau.
«Pitāmahair ācaritaṃ tath" âiva prapitāmahaiḥ
ady' ôpādāya taṃ mārgam abhiṣikto 'nupālaya.»

people all around. Rághava could hear the comments of the crowd gathered there and the different things the people of the city were saying about him in their deep delight: "There 14.25
goes Rághava now, on his way to wide sovereignty by the grace of the king. All our wishes have come true, now that we shall have him as our ruler. What a great gain for our people, that at long last this whole kingdom will pass into his hands."

Like Váishravana he proceeded on his way, while master musicians sounded his praises, and eulogists, bards and genealogists extolled him as they rode ahead, their horses neighing and elephants trumpeting. The lovely thoroughfare came into Rama's view, with its teeming elephants, chariots, horses, with the great floods of people overflowing the squares, with its profusion of precious objects and stocks of many wares.

ABOARD HIS CHARIOT in the midst of his delighted sup- 15.1
porters, majestic Rama beheld the city crowded with people of every description. Rama proceeded down the center of the royal highway. The splendid thoroughfare was fragrant with aloe-wood and adorned with white, cloudlike houses—gleaming and spacious, flanked with all kinds of wares and foodstuffs of every variety. As he made his way he honored every man, each according to his rank, and heard the many blessings spoken by his supporters: "May 15.5
you, after your consecration, embark upon and keep to the path travelled by your grandfathers and great-grandfathers." "Once Rama is king we shall live in even greater happiness

«Yathā sma lālitāḥ pitrā yathā pūrvaiḥ pitāmahaiḥ
tataḥ sukhataraṃ sarve Rāme vatsyāma rājani.»
«Alam adya hi bhuktena param'|ârthair alaṃ ca naḥ
yathā paśyāma niryāntaṃ Rāmaṃ rājye pratiṣṭhitam.»
«Ato hi na priyataraṃ n' ânyat kiṃ cid bhaviṣyati
yath"|âbhiṣeko Rāmasya rājyen' âmita|tejasaḥ.»
Etāś c' ânyāś ca suhṛdām udāsīnaḥ kathāḥ śubhāḥ
ātma|saṃpūjanīḥ śṛṇvan yayau Rāmo mahā|patham.
15.10 Na hi tasmān manaḥ kaś cic cakṣuṣī vā nar'|ôttamāt
naraḥ śaknoty apākraṣṭum atikrānte 'pi Rāghave.
Sarveṣāṃ sa hi dharm'|ātmā varṇānāṃ kurute dayām
caturṇāṃ hi vayaḥsthānāṃ tena te tam anuvratāḥ.
Sa rāja|kulam āsādya mah"|êndra|bhavan'|ôpamam
rāja|putraḥ pitur veśma praviveśa śriyā jvalan.
Sa sarvāḥ samatikramya kakṣyā Daśarath'|ātmajaḥ
saṃnivartya janaṃ sarvaṃ śuddh'|ântaḥ|puram abhyagāt.
Tataḥ praviṣṭe pitur antikaṃ tadā
janaḥ sa sarvo mudito nṛp'|ātmaje
pratīkṣate tasya punaḥ sma nirgamaṃ
yath"|ôdayaṃ candramasaḥ sarit|patiḥ.

16.1 Sa dadarś' āsane Rāmo niṣaṇṇaṃ pitaraṃ śubhe
Kaikeyī|sahitaṃ dīnaṃ mukhena pariśuṣyatā.
Sa pituś caraṇau pūrvam abhivādya vinītavat
tato vavande caraṇau Kaikeyyāḥ susamāhitaḥ.
«Rām' êty» uktvā ca vacanaṃ bāṣpa|paryākul'|ēkṣaṇaḥ

than when his father catered to us or his grandfathers in times past." "What need have we now of earthly pleasure, what need of heavenly bliss? Would only that we might see Rama return installed in the kingship." "There is nothing more welcome to us than this, that Rama, a man of immeasurable power, be consecrated as our king." Such and others like them were the heartfelt comments of his supporters, and, however laudatory, Rama listened impassively as he proceeded along the thoroughfare. And there was not 15.10
a man among them able to tear his eyes or thoughts away from Rághava, best of men, even when he had left them far behind.

Righteous Rama showed compassion to the people of all four social orders, in a way befitting their ages, and so they were all devoted to him. On reaching the palace that resembled great Indra's abode, the prince, ablaze with royal splendor, entered his father's residence. Passing through all the courtyards and turning back all his people, the son of Dasha·ratha came to the private inner chamber. When the prince had gone into his father's presence, all the people were delighted, and they awaited his return as the ocean, lord of rivers, awaits the rising of the moon.

RAMA SAW HIS FATHER, with a wretched look and his 16.1
mouth all parched, slumped upon his lovely couch, Kaikéyi at his side. First he made an obeisance with all deference at his father's feet and then did homage most scrupulously at the feet of Kaikéyi. "Rama!" cried the wretched king, his eyes brimming with tears, but he was unable to say anything more or to look at him. As if his foot had grazed a snake,

śaśāka nṛ|patir dīno n' ēkṣituṃ n' âbhibhāṣitum.
Tad apūrvaṃ nara|pater dṛṣṭvā rūpaṃ bhay'|āvaham
Rāmo 'pi bhayam āpannaḥ padā spṛṣṭv" êva pannagam.
Indriyair aprahṛṣṭais taṃ śoka|saṃtāpa|karśitam
niḥśvasantaṃ mahā|rājaṃ vyathit'|ākula|cetasaṃ.
Úrmi|mālinam akṣobhyaṃ kṣubhyantam iva sāgaram
upaplutam iv' ādityam ukt'|ânṛtam ṛṣiṃ yathā.
Acintya|kalpaṃ hi pitus taṃ śokam upadhārayan
babhūva saṃrabdhataraḥ samudra iva parvaṇi.

Cintayām āsa ca tadā Rāmaḥ pitṛ|hite rataḥ:
«kiṃ svid ady' âiva nṛ|patir na māṃ pratyabhinandati?
Anyadā māṃ pitā dṛṣṭvā kupito 'pi prasīdati.
tasya mām adya saṃprekṣya kim āyāsaḥ pravartate?
Sa dīna iva śok'|ārto viṣaṇṇa|vadana|dyutiḥ»
Kaikeyīm abhivādy' âiva Rāmo vacanam abravīt:
«Kaccin mayā n' âparādham ajñānād yena me pitā
kupitas? tan mam' ācakṣva tvaṃ c' âiv' âinaṃ prasādaya.
Vivarṇa|vadano dīno na hi mām abhibhāṣate
śārīro mānaso v" âpi kaccid enaṃ na bādhate
saṃtāpo v" âbhitāpo vā durlabhaṃ hi sadā sukham.
Kaccin na kiṃ cid Bharate kumāre priya|darśane
Śatrughne vā mahā|sattve mātṝṇāṃ vā mam' âśubham?

Atoṣayan mahā|rājam akurvan vā pitur vacaḥ
muhūrtam api n' êccheyaṃ jīvituṃ kupite nṛpe.
Yato|mūlaṃ naraḥ paśyet prādur|bhāvam ih' ātmanaḥ
kathaṃ tasmin na varteta pratyakṣe sati daivate?

Rama was seized with terror to see the expression on the king's face, one more terrifying than he had ever seen before. For the great king lay heaving sighs, racked with grief and remorse, all his senses numb with anguish, his mind stunned and confused. It was as if the imperturbable, wave-wreathed ocean had suddenly been shaken with perturbation, as if the sun had been eclipsed, or a seer had told a lie. His father's grief was incomprehensible to him, and the more he pondered it, the more his agitation grew, like that of the ocean under a full moon.

With his father's welfare at heart, Rama struggled to comprehend: "Why does the king not greet me, today of all days? On other occasions, when Father might be angry, the sight of me would calm him. Why, then, when he looked at me just now, did he instead become so troubled? He seems desolate and grief-stricken, and his face has lost its glow." Doing obeisance to Kaikéyi, Rama spoke these words: "I have not unknowingly committed some offense, have I, to anger my father? Tell me, and make him forgive me. His face is drained of color, he is desolate and does not speak to me. It cannot be, can it, that some physical illness or mental distress afflicts him? But it is true, well-being is not something one can always keep. Some misfortune has not befallen the handsome prince Bhárata, has it, or courageous Shatrúghna, or one of my mothers?

I should not wish to live an instant if his majesty, the great king, my father, were angered by my failure to satisfy him or do his bidding. How could a man not treat him as a deity incarnate, in whom he must recognize the very source of his existence in this world? Can it be that in anger you

Kaccit te paruṣaṃ kiṃ cid abhimānāt pitā mama
ukto bhavatyā kopena yatr' âsya lulitaṃ manaḥ?
Etad ācakṣva me devi tattvena paripṛcchataḥ:
kiṃ|nimittam apūrvo 'yaṃ vikāro manuj'|âdhipe?
Ahaṃ hi vacanād rājñaḥ pateyam api pāvake
bhakṣayeyaṃ viṣaṃ tīkṣṇaṃ majjeyam api c' ârṇave.
niyukto guruṇā pitrā nṛpeṇa ca hitena ca
Tad brūhi vacanaṃ devi rājño yad abhikāṅkṣitam
kariṣye pratijāne ca Rāmo dvir n' âbhibhāṣate.»
16.20 Tam ārjava|samāyuktam an|āryā satya|vādinam
uvāca Rāmaṃ Kaikeyī vacanaṃ bhṛśa|dāruṇam:
«Purā dev'|âsure yuddhe pitrā te mama Rāghava
rakṣitena varau dattau sa|śalyena mahā|raṇe.
Tatra me yācito rājā Bharatasy' âbhiṣecanam
gamanaṃ Daṇḍak'|âraṇye tava c' âdy' âiva Rāghava.
Yadi satya|pratijñaṃ tvaṃ pitaraṃ kartum icchasi
ātmānaṃ ca nara|śreṣṭha mama vākyam idaṃ śṛṇu.
Saṃnideśe pitus tiṣṭha yathā tena pratiśrutam
tvay" âraṇyaṃ praveṣṭavyaṃ nava varṣāṇi pañca ca.
16.25 Sapta sapta ca varṣāṇi Daṇḍak'|âraṇyam āśritaḥ
abhiṣekam imaṃ tyaktvā jaṭā|cīra|dharo vasa.
Bharataḥ Kosala|pure praśāstu vasudhām imām
nānā|ratna|samākīrṇāṃ sa|vāji|ratha|kuñjarām.»

Tad apriyam amitraghno vacanaṃ maraṇ'|ôpamam
śrutvā na vivyathe Rāmaḥ Kaikeyīṃ c' êdam abravīt:
Evam astu gamiṣyāmi vanaṃ vastum ahaṃ tv ataḥ
jaṭā|cīra|dharo rājñaḥ pratijñām anupālayan.

presumed to use harsh words with my father, and so threw his mind into such turmoil? Answer my questions truthfully, my lady: What has happened to cause this unprecedented change in the lord of men? At the bidding of the king, if enjoined by him, my *guru*, father, king and benefactor, I would hurl myself into fire, drink deadly poison or drown myself in the sea. Tell me, then, my lady, what the king would have me do. I will do it, I promise. Rama need not say so twice."

The ignoble Kaikéyi then addressed these ruthless words 16.20
to Rama, the upright and truthful prince: "Long ago, Rághava, in the war of the gods and *ásuras*, your father bestowed two boons on me, for protecting him when he was wounded in a great battle. By means of these I have demanded of the king that Bhárata be consecrated and that you, Rághava, be sent at once to Dándaka wilderness. If you wish to ensure that your father be true to his word, and you to your own, best of men, then listen to what I have to say. Abide by your father's guarantee, exactly as he promised it, and enter the forest for nine years and five. Forgo the con- 16.25
secration and withdraw to Dándaka wilderness, live there seven years and seven, wearing matted hair and bark-cloth garments. Let Bhárata rule this land from the city of the Kósalans, with all the treasures it contains, all its horses, chariots, elephants."

When Rama, slayer of enemies, heard Kaikéyi's hateful words, like death itself, he was not the least disconcerted, but only replied: "So be it. I shall go away to live in the forest, wearing matted hair and bark-cloth garments, to safeguard the promise of the king. But I want to know why the lord of

Idaṃ tu jñātum icchāmi kim|arthaṃ māṃ mahī|patiḥ
n' âbhinandati durdharṣo yathā|purvam ariṃ|damaḥ?
16.30 Manyur na ca tvayā kāryo devi brūhi tav' âgrataḥ:
yāsyāmi bhava suprītā vanaṃ cīra|jaṭā|dharaḥ.
Hitena guruṇā pitrā kṛtajñena nṛpeṇa ca
niyujyamāno viśrabdhaṃ kiṃ na kuryād ahaṃ priyam?
Alīkaṃ mānasaṃ tv ekaṃ hṛdayaṃ dahatīva me:
svayaṃ yan n' āha māṃ rājā Bharatasy' âbhiṣecanam.
Ahaṃ hi Sītāṃ rājyaṃ ca prāṇān iṣṭān dhanāni ca
hṛṣṭo bhrātre svayaṃ dadyāṃ Bharatāy' âpracoditaḥ.
Kiṃ punar manuj'|êndreṇa svayaṃ pitrā pracoditaḥ
tava ca priya|kām'|ârthaṃ pratijñām anupālayan?
16.35 Tad āśvāsaya hīmaṃ tvaṃ kiṃ nv idaṃ yan mahī|patiḥ
vasudh"|āsakta|nayano mandam aśrūṇi muñcati?
Gacchantu c' âiv' ānayituṃ dūtāḥ śīghra|javair hayaiḥ
Bharataṃ mātula|kulād ady' âiva nṛpa|śāsanāt.
Daṇḍak'|âraṇyam eṣo 'ham ito gacchāmi sa|tvaraḥ
avicārya pitur vākyaṃ samāvastuṃ catur|daśa.»
Sā hṛṣṭā tasya tad|vākyaṃ śrutvā Rāmasya Kaikayī
prasthānaṃ śraddadhānā hi tvarayām āsa Rāghavam.
«Evaṃ bhavatu yāsyanti dūtāḥ śīghra|javair hayaiḥ
Bharataṃ mātula|kulād upāvartayituṃ narāḥ.
16.40 Tava tv ahaṃ kṣamaṃ manye n' ôtsukasya vilambanam
Rāma tasmād itaḥ śīghraṃ vanaṃ tvaṃ gantum arhasi.
Vrīḍ"|ânvitaḥ svayaṃ yac ca nṛpas tvāṃ n' âbhibhāṣate
n' âitat kiṃ cin nara|śreṣṭha manyur eṣo 'panīyatām.

earth, the invincible tamer of foes, does not greet me as he used to? You need not worry, my lady. I say it to your face: I shall go to the forest—rest assured—wearing bark cloth and matted hair. Enjoined by my father, my benefactor, *guru* and king, a man who knows what is right to do, what would I hesitate to do in order to please him?

But there is still one thing troubling my mind and eating away at my heart: that the king does not tell me himself that Bhárata is to be consecrated. For my wealth, the kingship, Sita and my own dear life I would gladly give up to my brother Bhárata on my own, without any urging. How much more readily if urged by my father himself, the lord of men, in order to fulfill your fond desire and safeguard his promise? So you must reassure him. Why should the lord of earth keep his eyes fixed upon the ground and fitfully shed these tears? This very day let messengers depart on swift horses by order of the king to fetch Bhárata from his uncle's house. As for me, I shall leave here in all haste for Dándaka wilderness, without questioning my father's word, to live there fourteen years."

Kaikéyi was delighted to hear these words of Rama's, and, trusting them implicitly, she pressed Rághava to set out at once. "So be it. Men shall go as messengers on swift horses to bring home Bhárata from his uncle's house. But since you are now so eager, Rama, I do not think it wise to linger. You should therefore proceed directly from here to the forest. That the king is ashamed and does not address you himself, that is nothing, best of men, you needn't worry about that. But so long as you have not hastened from the city and gone to the forest, Rama, your father shall neither bathe

Yāvat tvaṃ na vanaṃ yātaḥ purād asmād abhitvaran
pitā tāvan na te Rāma snāsyate bhokṣyate 'pi vā.»
«Dhik kaṣṭam iti» niḥśvasya rājā śoka|pariplutaḥ
mūrchito nyapatat tasmin paryaṅke hema|bhūṣite.
Rāmo 'py utthāpya rājānaṃ Kaikeyy" âbhipracoditaḥ
kaśay" êv' āhato vājī vanaṃ gantuṃ kṛta|tvaraḥ.
Tad apriyam an|āryāyā vacanaṃ dāruṇ'|ôdaram
śrutvā gata|vyatho Rāmaḥ Kaikeyīṃ vākyam abravīt:
«N' âham artha|paro devi lokam āvastum utsahe
viddhi mām ṛṣibhis tulyaṃ kevalaṃ dharmam āsthitam.
Yad atra|bhavataḥ kiṃ cic chakyaṃ kartuṃ priyaṃ mayā
prāṇān api parityajya sarvathā kṛtam eva tat.
Na hy ato dharma|caraṇaṃ kiṃ cid asti mahattaram:
yathā pitari śuśrūṣā tasya vā vacana|kriyā.
Anukto 'py atra|bhavatā bhavatyā vacanād aham
vane vatsyāmi vijane varṣāṇīha catur|daśa.
Na nūnaṃ mayi Kaikeyi kiṃ cid āśaṃsase guṇam
yad rājānam avocas tvaṃ mam' êśvaratarā satī.
Yāvan mātaram āpṛcche Sītāṃ c' ânunayāmy aham
tato 'dy' âiva gamiṣyāmi Daṇḍakānāṃ mahad vanam.
Bharataḥ pālayed rājyaṃ śuśrūṣec ca pitur yathā
tathā bhavatyā kartavyaṃ sa hi dharmaḥ sanātanaḥ.»
Sa Rāmasya vacaḥ śrutvā bhṛśaṃ duḥkha|hataḥ pitā
śokād aśaknuvan bāṣpaṃ praruroda mahā|svanam.
Vanditvā caraṇau Rāmo visaṃjñasya pitus tadā
Kaikeyyāś c' âpy an|āryāyā niṣpapāta mahā|dyutiḥ.
Sa Rāmaḥ pitaraṃ kṛtvā Kaikeyīṃ ca pradakṣiṇam
niṣkramyāntaḥ|purāt tasmāt svaṃ dadarśa suhṛj|janam.

nor eat." "Oh curse you!" the king gasped, overwhelmed with grief, and upon the gilt couch he fell back in a faint. Rama raised up the king, pressed though he was by Kaikéyi—like a horse whipped with a crop—to make haste and depart for the forest. Listening to the ignoble Kaikéyi's hateful words, so dreadful in their consequences, Rama remained unperturbed and only said to her:

"My lady, it is not in the hopes of gain that I suffer living in this world. You should know that, like the seers, I have but one concern and that is righteousness. Whatever I can do to please this honored man I will do at any cost, even if it means giving up my life. For there is no greater act of righteousness than this: obedience to one's father and doing as he bids. Even unbidden by this honored man, at your bidding alone I shall live for fourteen years in the desolate forest. Indeed, Kaikéyi, you must ascribe no virtue to me at all if you had to appeal to the king, when you yourself are so venerable in my eyes. Let me only take leave of my mother, and settle matters with Sita. Then I shall go, this very day, to the vast forest of the Dándakas. You must see to it that Bhárata obeys Father and guards the kingdom, for that is the eternal way of righteousness."

When his father heard Rama's words, he was stricken with such deep sorrow that he could not hold back his sobs in his grief and broke out in loud weeping. Splendid Rama did homage at the feet of his unconscious father and at the feet of that ignoble woman, Kaikéyi; then he turned to leave. Reverently Rama circled his father and Kaikéyi, and, withdrawing from the inner chamber, he saw his group

Taṃ bāṣpa|paripūrṇ'|âkṣaḥ pṛṣṭhato 'nujagāma ha
Lakṣmaṇaḥ parama|kruddhaḥ Sumitr"|ānanda|vardhanaḥ.
Ābhiṣecanikaṃ bhāṇḍaṃ kṛtvā Rāmaḥ pradakṣiṇam
śanair jagāma s'|âpekṣo dṛṣṭiṃ tatr'âvicārayan.
Na c' âsya mahatīṃ lakṣmīṃ rājya|nāśo 'pakarṣati
loka|kāntasya kāntatvaṃ śīta|raśmer iva kṣapā.
Na vanaṃ gantukāmasya tyajataś ca vasuṃ|dharām
sarva|lok'|âtigasy' êva lakṣyate citta|vikriyā.
16.60 Dhārayan manasā duḥkham indriyāṇi nigṛhya ca
praviveś' ātmavān veśma mātur apriya|śaṃsivān.
Praviśya veśm'|âtibhṛśaṃ mud" ânvitaṃ
samīkṣya tāṃ c' ârtha|vipattim āgatām
na c' âiva Rāmo 'tra jagāma vikriyāṃ
suhṛj|janasy' ātma|vipatti|śaṅkayā.

17.1 Rāmas tu bhṛśam āyasto niḥśvasann iva kuñjaraḥ
jagāma sahito bhrātrā mātur antaḥ|puraṃ vaśī.
So 'paśyat puruṣaṃ tatra vṛddhaṃ parama|pūjitam
upaviṣṭaṃ gṛha|dvāri tiṣṭhataś c' âparān bahūn.
Praviśya prathamāṃ kakṣyāṃ dvitīyāyāṃ dadarśa saḥ
brāhmaṇān veda|saṃpannān vṛddhān rājñ" âbhisatkṛtān.
Praṇamya Rāmas tān vṛddhāṃs tṛtīyāyāṃ dadarśa saḥ
striyo vṛddhāś ca bālāś ca dvāra|rakṣaṇa|tatparāḥ.
17.5 Vardhayitvā prahṛṣṭās tāḥ praviśya ca gṛhaṃ striyaḥ
nyavedayanta tvaritā Rāma|mātuḥ priyaṃ tadā.

of friends. Lákshmana, the delight of Sumítra, fell in behind him, his eyes brimming with tears, in a towering rage. Reverently circling the equipment for the consecration, but careful not to gaze at it, Rama slowly went away.

The loss of the kingship diminished his great majesty as little as night diminishes the loveliness of the cool-rayed moon, beloved of the world. Though he was on the point of leaving his native land and going to the forest, he was no more discomposed than one who has passed beyond all things of this world. Holding back his sorrow within 16.60
his mind, keeping his every sense in check and fully self-possessed he made his way to his mother's residence to tell her the sad news. As Rama entered her residence, where joy still reigned supreme, as he reflected on the sudden wreck of all his fortunes, even then he showed no sign of discomposure, for fear it might endanger the lives of those he loved.

Sorely troubled, heaving sighs like an elephant, Rama 17.1
of his own accord went with his brother to his mother's inner chamber. He observed the venerable elder seated there at the door of the house and many other people standing about. Passing through the first courtyard, he saw the *brahman*s in the second, old men expert in the Vedas and held in honor by the king. Rama bowed to the old men and passed into the third courtyard, where he saw women old and young vigilantly standing guard at the door. In delight the women 17.5
congratulated him and then rushed into the house to pass on the news to Rama's mother.

Kausaly" âpi tadā devī rātriṃ sthitvā samāhitā
prabhāte tv akarot pūjāṃ Viṣṇoḥ putra|hit'|âiṣiṇī.
Sā kṣauma|vasanā hṛṣṭā nityaṃ vrata|parāyaṇā
agniṃ juhoti sma tadā mantravat kṛta|maṅgalā.
Praviśya ca tadā Rāmo mātur antaḥ|puraṃ śubham
dadarśa mātaraṃ tatra hāvayantīṃ hut'|âśanam.
Sā cirasy' ātmajaṃ dṛṣṭvā mātṛ|nandanam āgatam
abhicakrāma saṃhṛṣṭā kiśoraṃ vaḍavā yathā.
17.10 Tam uvāca durādharṣaṃ Rāghavaṃ sutam ātmanaḥ
Kausalyā putra|vātsalyād idaṃ priyahitaṃ vacaḥ:
«Vṛddhānāṃ dharma|śīlānāṃ
rāja|ṛṣīṇāṃ mah"|ātmanām
prāpnuhy āyuś ca kīrtiṃ ca
dharmaṃ c' ôpahitaṃ kule.
Satya|pratijñaṃ pitaraṃ rājānaṃ paśya Rāghava
ady' âiva hi tvāṃ dharm'|ātmā yauvarājye 'bhiṣekṣyati.»
Mātaraṃ Rāghavaḥ kiṃ cit prasāry' âñjalim abravīt
sa svabhāva|vinītaś ca gauravāc ca tad" ānataḥ:
«Devi nūnaṃ na jānīṣe mahad bhayam upasthitam
idaṃ tava ca duḥkhāya Vaidehyā Lakṣmaṇasya ca.
17.15 Catur|daśa hi varṣāṇi vatsyāmi vijane vane
madhu|mūla|phalair jīvan hitvā munivad āmiṣam.
Bharatāya mahā|rājo yauvarājyaṃ prayacchati
māṃ punar Daṇḍak'|âraṇyaṃ vivāsayati tāpasaṃ.»
Tām a|duḥkh'|ôcitāṃ dṛṣṭvā patitāṃ kadalīm iva
Rāmas tūtthāpayām āsa mātaraṃ gata|cetasaṃ.
Upāvṛty' ôtthitāṃ dīnāṃ vaḍavām iva vāhitām

Queen Kausálya had spent the night in meditation, and now in the early morning was worshipping Vishnu to secure the welfare of her son. Dressed in linen, intent upon her vow and with deep delight, she was then pouring an oblation into the fire in accordance with the Vedic verses and pronouncing benedictions. Entering her lovely private chamber, Rama saw his mother as she was pouring the oblation into the fire. When she saw that her son, his mother's one joy, had finally come, she approached him in delight, as a mare might her colt. In her deep maternal affection for her son, the 17.10
invincible Rághava, Kausálya addressed him with these kind and beneficial words:

"May you attain the life span of the great and aged royal seers who keep to the ways of righteousness. May you attain their fame and the righteousness that benefits a ruling house. See, Rághava, your father is as good as his word. This very day the righteous king will consecrate you as prince regent."

Extending a little the hands he held cupped in reverence, Rághava bowed low out of natural courtesy and profound respect. Then he said to his mother: "My lady, I see you do not know of the great danger at hand. It will bring sadness to you, Vaidéhi and Lákshmana. For fourteen years 17.15
I must dwell in the desolate forest, living on honey, fruit and roots, giving up meat like a sage. The great king is awarding Bhárata the office of prince regent and banishing me to Dándaka wilderness and a life of asceticism." A sorrow such as she had never known swept over her, and Rama saw his mother fall down in a faint, like a broken plantain tree. He came to her side and helped her up, and as she stood there in her desolation, like a mare forced to draw

pāṃśu|guṇṭhita|sarv'|â"gnīṃ vimamarśa ca pāṇinā.
Sā Rāghavam upāsīnam a|sukh'|ārtā sukh'|ôcitā
uvāca puruṣa|vyāghram upaśṛṇvati Lakṣmaṇe:
«Yadi putra na jāyethā mama śokāya Rāghava
na sma duḥkham ato bhūyaḥ paśyeyam aham aprajā
Eka eva hi vandhyāyāḥ śoko bhavati mānavaḥ
‹apraj" âsm' îti› saṃtāpo na hy anyaḥ putra vidyate.
Na dṛṣṭa|pūrvaṃ kalyāṇaṃ sukhaṃ vā pati|pauruṣe
api putre vipaśyeyam iti Rām' āsthitaṃ mayā.
Sā bahūny a|manojñāni vākyāni hṛdaya|cchidām
ahaṃ śroṣye sapatnīnām avarāṇāṃ varā satī
ato duḥkhataraṃ kiṃ nu pramadānāṃ bhaviṣyati.
Tvayi saṃnihite 'py evam aham āsaṃ nirākṛtā.
kiṃ punaḥ proṣite tāta dhruvaṃ maraṇam eva me?
Yo hi māṃ sevate kaś cid atha v" âpy anuvartate
Kaikeyyāḥ putram anvīkṣya sa jano n' âbhibhāṣate.
Daśa sapta ca varṣāṇi tava jātasya Rāghava
atītāni prakāṅkṣantyā mayā duḥkha|parikṣayam.
Upavāsaiś ca yogaiś ca bahubhiś ca pariśramaiḥ
duḥkhaṃ saṃvardhito moghaṃ tvaṃ hi durgatayā mayā.
Sthiraṃ tu hṛdayaṃ manye mam' êdaṃ yan na dīryate
prāvṛṣīva mahā|nadyāḥ spṛṣṭaṃ kūlaṃ nav'|âmbhasā.
Mam' âiva nūnaṃ maraṇaṃ na vidyate
na c' âvakāśo 'sti yama|kṣaye mama
yad antako 'dy' âiva na māṃ jihīrṣati

a heavy load, he brushed away the dust that covered her whole body. Tortured by such unhappiness as she had never known before, she spoke to Rághava, tiger among men, as he attended on her, with Lákshmana listening:

"Rághava, my son, had you never been born to bring me such grief, had I been childless, I would have been spared any further sorrow. A barren woman's grief is only of the mind and only a single grief—the painful thought 'I have no child'; she never comes to feel another, my son. But the joy and comfort I had not found to be within my husband's power to give me, Rama, I cherished hopes I perhaps might find in a son. How their words will break my heart, the many, painful words I shall hear from those junior co-wives, being their senior as I am. And what could bring a woman greater sorrow? Even with you present this is how I am spurned. What will it be like when you are gone, my child? Surely nothing is left me but to die. For anyone who used to serve me or respect my wishes will look anxiously toward Kaikéyi's son without so much as a word for me.

The ten years and seven since you were born, Rághava, I have passed yearning to put an end to my sorrow. It was so difficult to raise you in my wretched state, and it was all in vain, the meditation and the fasts, and all the pains I took. How hard this heart of mine must be that it does not crumble, as the bank of a great river crumbles in the rains when the fresh waters wash over it. It must be that I can never die, or that no room is left for me in the house of Yama, if even now Death will not carry me off, as brutally as a lion carries off a whimpering doe. My heart must be made of iron that it does not split and shatter upon the ground, and

prasahya siṃho rudatīṃ mṛgīm iva.
17.30 Sthiraṃ hi nūnaṃ hṛdayaṃ mam' āyasaṃ
na bhidyate yad bhuvi n' âvadīryate
anena duḥkhena ca deham arpitaṃ
dhruvaṃ hy akāle maraṇaṃ na vidyate.
Idaṃ tu duḥkhaṃ yad an|arthakāni
me vratāni dānāni ca saṃyamāś ca hi
tapaś ca taptaṃ yad apatya|kāraṇāt
suniṣphalaṃ bījam iv' ôptam ūṣare.
Yadi hy akāle maraṇaṃ svay" êcchayā
labheta kaś cid guru|duḥkha|karśitaḥ
gat" âham ady' âiva pareta|saṃsadaṃ
vinā tvayā dhenur iv' ātmajena vai.»
Bhṛśam asukham amarṣitā tadā
bahu vilalāpa samīkṣya Rāghavam
vyasanam upaniśāmya sā mahat
sutam iva baddham avekṣya saurabhī.

18.1 Tathā tu vilapantīṃ tāṃ Kausalyāṃ Rāmamātaram
uvāca Lakṣmaṇo dīnas tat kāla|sadṛśaṃ vacaḥ:
«Na rocate mam' âpy etad ārye yad Rāghavo vanam
tyaktvā rājya|śriyaṃ gacchet striyā vākya|vaśaṃ gataḥ.
Viparītaś ca vṛddhaś ca viṣayaiś ca pradharṣitaḥ
nṛpaḥ kim iva na brūyāc codyamānaḥ samanmathaḥ?
N' âsy' âparādhaṃ paśyāmi n' âpi doṣaṃ tathā|vidham
yena nirvāsyate rāṣṭrād vana|vāsāya Rāghavaḥ.
18.5 Na taṃ paśyāmy ahaṃ loke parokṣam api yo naraḥ
amitro 'pi nirasto 'pi yo 'sya doṣam udāharet.
Deva|kalpam ṛjuṃ dāntaṃ ripūṇām api vatsalam
avekṣamāṇaḥ ko dharmaṃ tyajet putram a|kāraṇāt?

my body, too, under this crushing sorrow. How true it is that no one can die before his fated hour. What a sorrowful thing that my vows, my gifts of alms and acts of self-denial have all been to no avail, that the austerities I practiced for my child's sake have proved to be as barren as seed sown in a desert. For if a person broken by heavy sorrow could die before his fated hour, of his own free will, then left without you as I am, like a cow without her calf, I would go this very instant to the congregation of the dead."

When she looked at Rághava and contemplated the great calamity to come, her unhappiness was too much for her to bear, and she broke out in lamentation, as a cow will do at the sight of her calf being bound and dragged away.

LÁKSHMANA GREW DESOLATE while Rama's mother Kausálya made this lamentation and then, in the heat of the moment, he addressed her: "I do not approve of it either, my lady, that Rághava should abdicate the majesty of kingship and go off to the forest, bowing to the demands of a woman. The king is perverse, old and debauched by pleasures. What would he not say under pressure, mad with passion as he is? I know of no crime on Rághava's part nor any fault that could justify his banishment from the kingdom to a life in the forest. I do not know of a single man in this world, not an adversary, nor even an outcast, who would assert such a fault, even behind our backs. Who that has any regard for what is right could renounce, without any provocation, a son so godlike, upright and self-restrained, who cherishes even his enemies? What son, mindful of the conduct of

18.1

17.5

Tad idaṃ vacanaṃ rājñaḥ punar bālyam upeyuṣaḥ
putraḥ ko hṛdaye kuryād rāja|vṛttam anusmaran?
Yāvad eva na jānāti kaś cid artham imaṃ naraḥ
tāvad eva mayā sārdham ātmasthaṃ kuru śāsanam.
Mayā pārśve sa|dhanuṣā tava guptasya Rāghava
kaḥ samartho 'dhikaṃ kartuṃ kṛt'|ântasy' êva tiṣṭhataḥ?
Nirmanuṣyām imāṃ sarvām Ayodhyāṃ manuja|ṛṣabha
kariṣyāmi śarais tīkṣṇair yadi sthāsyati vipriye.
Bharatasy' âtha pakṣyo vā yo v" âsya hitam icchati
sarvān etān vadhiṣyāmi mṛdur hi paribhūyate.
Tvayā c' âiva mayā c' âiva kṛtvā vairam anuttamam
kasya śaktiḥ śriyaṃ dātuṃ Bharatāy' âri|śāsana?
Anurakto 'smi bhāvena bhrātaraṃ devi tattvataḥ
satyena dhanuṣā c' âiva datten' êṣṭena te śape.
Dīptam agnim araṇyaṃ vā yadi Rāmaḥ pravekṣyate
praviṣṭaṃ tatra māṃ devi tvaṃ pūrvam avadhāraya.
Harāmi vīryād duḥkhaṃ te tamaḥ sūrya iv' ôditaḥ
devī paśyatu me vīryaṃ! Rāghavaś c' âiva paśyatu!»
Etat tu vacanaṃ śrutvā Lakṣmaṇasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
uvāca Rāmaṃ Kausalyā rudantī śoka|lālasā:
«Bhrātus te vadataḥ putra Lakṣmaṇasya śrutaṃ tvayā
yad atr' ânantaraṃ tat tvaṃ kuruṣva yadi rocate.
Na c' âdharmyaṃ vacaḥ śrutvā sapatnyā mama bhāṣitam
vihāya śoka|saṃtaptāṃ gantum arhasi māṃ itaḥ.
Dharmajña yadi dharmiṣṭho dharmaṃ caritum icchasi
śuśrūṣa māṃ ihasthas tvaṃ cara dharmam anuttamam.
Śuśrūṣur jananīṃ putra sva|gṛhe niyato vasan

kings, would take to heart the words of a king who has become a child again?

Before anyone learns of this matter, let me help you seize control of the government. With me at your side, bow in hand to protect you, who could prevail against you, Rághava, when you take your stand like Death itself? With my sharp arrows, bull among men, I will empty Ayódhya of men if it stands in opposition. I will slaughter everyone who sides with Bhárata or champions his cause. Leniency always ends in defeat. Now that the king has provoked our implacable enmity, yours and mine, chastiser of foes, what power can he summon to bestow sovereignty on Bhárata? Truly, my lady, the loyalty I feel to my brother comes from the bottom of my heart. I swear it to you by my truth and my bow, by my gifts of alms and sacrifices. Should Rama enter the forest, or a blazing fire, my lady, rest assured that I shall have entered first. I will drive your sorrow away with all the power of the rising sun that drives away the dark. Let the queen behold my power! Let Rághava behold it!" 18.10 18.15

When she heard great Lákshmana's words, Kausálya, weeping and sick with grief, said to Rama: "My son, you have heard your brother Lákshmana speak. Whatever is best to do next you must do, as you see fit. But you must not, heeding the unrighteous words spoken by my co-wife, go away and leave me stricken with grief. You know what is right and if you would do it, my most righteous son, obey me. Stay here and do your supreme duty. Káshyapa obeyed his mother, my son, and lived a life of self-discipline at home. In this way he acquired ultimate ascetic power and reached the highest heaven. In no way am I less deserving 18.20

pareṇa tapasā yuktaḥ Kāśyapas tridivaṃ gataḥ.
Yath" âiva rājā pūjyas te gauraveṇa tathā hy aham
tvāṃ n' âham anujānāmi na gantavyam ito vanam.
Tvad|viyogān na me kāryaṃ jīvitena sukhena vā
tvayā saha mama śreyas tṛṇānām api bhakṣaṇam.
Yadi tvaṃ yāsyasi vanaṃ tyaktvā māṃ śoka|lālasām
ahaṃ prāyam ih' āsiṣye na hi śakṣyāmi jīvitum.
Tatas tvaṃ prāpsyase putra nirayaṃ loka|viśrutam
brahma|hatyām iv' âdharmāt samudraḥ saritāṃ patiḥ.»
18.25 Vilapantīṃ tathā dīnāṃ Kausalyāṃ jananīṃ tataḥ
uvāca Rāmo dharm'|ātmā vacanaṃ dharma|saṃhitam:
«N' âsti śaktiḥ pitur vākyaṃ samatikramituṃ mama
prasādaye tvāṃ śirasā gantum icchāmy ahaṃ vanam.
Ūṣiṇā ca pitur vākyaṃ kurvatā vrata|cāriṇā
gaur hatā jānatā dharmaṃ kaṇḍun" âpi vipaścitā.
Asmākaṃ ca kule pūrvaṃ sagarasy' ājñayā pituḥ
khanadbhiḥ Sāgarair bhūtim avāptaḥ sumahān vadhaḥ.
Jāmadagnyena Rāmeṇa Reṇukā jananī svayam
kṛttā paraśun" âraṇye pitur vacana|kāriṇā.
18.30 Na khalv etan may" âikena kriyate pitṛ|śāsanam
pūrvair ayam abhipreto gato mārgo 'nugamyate.
Tad etat tu mayā kāryaṃ kriyate bhuvi n' ânyathā
pitur hi vacanaṃ kurvan na kaś cin nāma hīyate.»
Tām evam uktvā jananīṃ Lakṣmaṇaṃ punar abravīt:
«tava Lakṣmaṇa jānāmi mayi sneham anuttamam
abhiprāyam avijñāya satyasya ca śamasya ca.
Dharmo hi paramo loke dharme satyaṃ pratiṣṭhitam

than the king of the respect you owe a *guru*. I will not give you permission, you may not go away to the forest. Parted from you what use have I for a life of comfort? Better for me to be with you and eat the grass of the fields. If you go to the forest leaving me sick with grief, I will fast to death right here, for I could not bear to go on living. And you will then be guilty of a crime held in infamy in the world, like the ocean, lord of rivers, who through unrighteous conduct incurred the guilt of *brahman*-murder."

So his desolate mother Kausálya lamented, and righteous 18.25
Rama replied to her in a manner consistent with righteousness: "It is not within my power to defy my father's bidding. I bow my head in supplication; I wish to go to the forest. Even the wise seer Kandu, a man strict in his observances, slew a cow at the bidding of his father, for he knew that it was right. And in our own family long ago the sons of Ságara, at their father's command, dug up the earth and thereby met with wholesale slaughter. Rama Jamad·agnya, at his father's bidding, took an axe and by his own hand butchered his mother Rénuka in the forest. So you see, it 18.30
is not I alone who acts as his father instructs. I am only following the path sanctioned and taken by those men of old. It is this which is my duty on earth, and I cannot shirk it. Besides, no one who does his father's bidding ever comes to grief."

So he spoke to his mother, and then he turned to Lákshmana and said, "I well know, Lákshmana, the profound affection you bear me. But you fail to understand the real meaning of truth and self-restraint. Righteousness is paramount in the world and on righteousness is truth founded.

dharma|saṃśritam etac ca pitur vacanam uttamam.
Saṃśrutya ca pitur vākyaṃ mātur vā brāhmaṇasya vā
na kartavyaṃ vṛthā vīra dharmam āśritya tiṣṭhatā.
18.35 So 'haṃ na śakṣyāmi pitur niyogam ativartitum
pitur hi vacanād vīra Kaikeyy" âhaṃ pracoditaḥ.
Tad enāṃ visṛj' ânāryāṃ
kṣatra|dharm'|āśritāṃ matim
dharmam āśraya mā taikṣṇyaṃ
mad|buddhir anugamyatām.»
Tam evam uktvā sauhārdād bhrātaraṃ Lakṣmaṇ'|âgrajaḥ
uvāca bhūyaḥ Kausalyāṃ prāñjaliḥ śiras" ānataḥ:
Anumanyasva māṃ devi gamiṣyantam ito vanam
śāpitāsi mama prāṇaiḥ kuru svasty|ayanāni me
tīrṇa|pratijñaś ca vanāt punar eṣyāmy ahaṃ purīm.
Yaśo hy ahaṃ kevala|rājya|kāraṇān
na pṛṣṭhataḥ kartum alaṃ mah"|ôdayam
a|dīrgha|kāle na tu devi jīvite
vṛṇe 'varām adya mahīm a|dharmataḥ.»
18.40 Prasādayan nara|vṛṣabhaḥ sa mātaraṃ
parākramāj jigamiṣur eva Daṇḍakān
ath' ânujaṃ bhṛśam anuśāsya darśanaṃ
cakāra tāṃ hṛdi jananīṃ pradakṣiṇam.

19.1 Atha taṃ vyathayā dīnaṃ sa|viśeṣam amarṣitam
śvasantam iva nāg'|êndraṃ roṣa|visphārit'|ēkṣaṇam
Āsādya Rāmaḥ Saumitriṃ suhṛdaṃ bhrātaraṃ priyam
uvāc' êdaṃ sa dhairyeṇa dhārayan sattvam ātmavān:
«Saumitre yo 'bhiṣek'|ârthe mama saṃbhāra|saṃbhramaḥ

This command of Father's is based on righteousness and is absolute. Having once heard a father's command, a mother's or a *brahman*'s, one must not disregard it, my mighty brother, if one would hold to what is right. I cannot disobey 18.35
my father's injunction, mighty brother, and it is at Father's bidding that Kaikéyi has coerced me. So give up this ignoble notion that is based on the code of the *kshátriya*; be of like mind with me and base your actions on righteousness, not violence."

So Lákshmana's eldest brother spoke affectionately to his brother. Then, with head bowed and hands cupped in reverence, he once more addressed Kausálya: "Give me your permission, my lady, to go away to the forest. By my very life I adjure you, bestow your blessings on my journey. Once I have fulfilled the promise, I will return to the city from the forest. I cannot for the sake of mere kingship turn my back on glory, whose reward is great; nor, since life is so short, my lady, would I choose today this paltry land against all that is right." The bull among men earnestly pleaded with 18.40
his mother—he wanted only to go to the Dándakas—and firmly taught his younger brother the proper view of things. Then, in his heart, he reverently circled the woman who gave him birth.

Saumítri was shocked and desolate; this was all far 19.1
more than he could bear. He heaved a sigh like a mighty serpent, and his eyes bulged with wrath. But Rama steadfastly maintained his composure and in full self-possession he turned to his beloved friend and brother and spoke: "Saumítri, let this flurry in preparation of my consecration, let it

abhiṣeka|nivṛtty|arthe so 'stu saṃbhāra|saṃbhramaḥ.
Yasyā mad|abhiṣek'|ârthaṃ mānasaṃ paritapyate
mātā naḥ sā yathā na syāt sa|viśaṅkā tathā kuru.
Tasyāḥ śaṅkāmayaṃ duḥkhaṃ muhūrtam api n' ôtsahe
manasi pratisaṃjātaṃ Saumitre 'ham upekṣitum.
Na buddhi|pūrvaṃ n' âbuddhaṃ smarāmīha kadā cana
mātṝṇāṃ vā pitur v" âhaṃ kṛtam alpaṃ ca vipriyam.

Satyaḥ saty'|âbhisaṃdhaś ca nityaṃ satya|parākramaḥ
para|loka|bhayād bhīto nirbhayo 'stu pitā mama.
Tasy' âpi hi bhaved asmin karmaṇy apratisaṃhṛte
satyaṃ n' êti manas|tāpas tasya tāpas tapec ca mām.
Abhiṣeka|vidhānaṃ tu tasmāt saṃhṛtya Lakṣmaṇa
anvag ev' âham icchāmi vanaṃ gantum itaḥ purāt.
Mama pravrājanād adya kṛta|kṛtyā nṛp'|ātmajā
sutaṃ Bharatam avyagram abhiṣecayitā tataḥ.
Mayi cīr'|âjina|dhare jaṭā|maṇḍala|dhāriṇi
gate 'raṇyaṃ ca Kaikeyyā bhaviṣyati manaḥ|sukham.
Buddhiḥ praṇītā yen' êyaṃ manaś ca susamāhitam
tat tu n' ârhāmi saṃkleṣṭuṃ pravrajiṣyāmi mā ciram.

Kṛt'|ântas tv eva Saumitre draṣṭavyo mat|pravāsane
rājyasya ca vitīrṇasya punar eva nivartane.
Kaikeyyāḥ pratipattir hi kathaṃ syān mama pīḍane
yadi bhāvo na daivo 'yaṃ kṛt'|ânta|vihito bhavet?
Jānāsi hi yathā saumya na mātṛṣu mam' ântaram
bhūta|pūrvaṃ viśeṣo vā tasyā mayi sute 'pi vā.
So 'bhiṣeka|nivṛtty|arthaiḥ pravās'|ârthaiś ca durvacaiḥ

all now be directed toward stopping it. You must take care that our mother, to whom my consecration was a source of such heartache, be anxious no more. Not for a moment, Saumítri, can I disregard the anxious sorrow that has sprung up in her heart. I do not recall ever doing the slightest thing, intentionally or unintentionally, to displease my mothers or father.

Let my father—a truthful man, true to his word, ever striving for truth—let him be freed from the fears he has of what other people might say. For if this rite were not called off, he too would suffer mental torment, to hear his truthfulness impugned, and his torment would torment me. So call off the consecration ceremony, Lákshmana. As soon as you have done so, I wish to leave the city for the forest. By my immediate banishment the princess will achieve her goal, and be able to consecrate her son Bhárata without any hindrance. For only when I have gone into the wilderness, dressed in bark-cloth garments and hides, wearing a crown of matted hair, will Kaikéyi find peace of mind. Since my mind is made up and my heart is set on it, I should not cause more pain. I shall go into banishment without delay.

It is nothing but destiny, Saumítri, that we must see at work in my exile and in the revocation of the kingship, which had been awarded to me. For why should Kaikéyi be so determined to harm me were this intention of hers not fated and ordained by destiny? You know yourself, dear brother, that never in the past have I drawn any distinction between our mothers, nor did she ever differentiate between her son and me. I cannot credit anything but fate for those words of hers, those hard and brutal words that meant the

ugrair vākyair ahaṃ tasyā n' ânyad daivāt samarthaye.
Kathaṃ prakṛti|saṃpannā rāja|putrī tathā|guṇā
brūyāt sā prākṛt" êva strī mat|pīḍāṃ bhartṛ|saṃnidhau?
Yad acintyaṃ tu tad daivaṃ bhūteṣv api na hanyate
vyaktaṃ mayi ca tasyāṃ ca patito hi viparyayaḥ.

Kaś ca daivena Saumitre yoddhum utsahate pumān
yasya na grahaṇaṃ kiṃ cit karmaṇo 'nyatra dṛśyate?
19.20 Sukha|duḥkhe bhaya|krodhau lābh'|âlābhau bhav'|âbhavau
yac ca kiṃ cit tathā|bhūtaṃ nanu daivasya karma tat.
Vyāhate 'py abhiṣeke me paritāpo na vidyate
tasmād a|paritāpaḥ saṃs tvam apy anuvidhāya mām
pratisaṃhāraya kṣipram ābhiṣecanikīṃ kriyām.
Na Lakṣmaṇ' âsmin mama rājya|vighne
mātā yavīyasy atiśaṅkanīyā
daiv'|âbhipannā hi vadanty an|iṣṭaṃ
jānāsi daivaṃ ca tathā|prabhāvam.»

20.1 Iti bruvati Rāme tu Lakṣmaṇo 'dhaḥ|śirā muhuḥ
śrutvā madhyaṃ jagāmeva manasā duḥkha|harṣayoḥ.
Tadā tu baddhvā bhrukuṭīṃ bhruvor madhye nara|ṛṣabha
niśaśvāsa mahā|sarpo bilastha iva roṣitaḥ.
Tasya duṣprativīkṣyaṃ tad bhrukuṭī|sahitaṃ tadā
babhau kruddhasya siṃhasya mukhasya sadṛśaṃ mukham.
Agrahas taṃ vidhunvaṃs tu hastī hastam iv' ātmanaḥ
tiryag ūrdhvaṃ śarīre ca pātayitvā śiro|dharām.
20.5 Agr'|âkṣṇā vīkṣamāṇas tu tiryag bhrātaram abravīt:
«asthāne saṃbhramo yasya jāto vai sumahānayaḥ.

revocation of the consecration and my exile. How could she, a princess, so good-natured and virtuous, speak to my harm in the presence of her husband, like the commonest of women? What cannot be explained must surely be fate, which clearly no creature can resist; for how complete the reversal that has befallen her and me.

What man has the power to contest his fate, Saumítri, when one cannot even perceive it except from its effect? Happiness and sadness, fear and anger, gain and loss, birth 19.20
and death—all things such as these must surely be the effects of fate. I do not feel sad even though my consecration has been thwarted, and neither must you. Comply with my wishes and at once put a stop to the rite of consecration. It is not our younger mother, Lákshmana, who should be blamed for preventing my becoming king. People overmastered by fate say things they never wanted to—you know fate has such power."

While Rama was speaking Lákshmana kept his head 20.1
lowered the whole time and listened with his mind poised, it seemed, midway between joy and sorrow. But then that bull among men knit a frown between his brows and heaved a sigh like a great snake seized with anger in its lair. His frowning face was terrible to see—it looked like the face of a raging lion. He shook his hand as an elephant shakes its trunk, from side to side, up and down, and let his head fall on his chest. Looking askance at his brother, from the 20.5
corner of his eye, he said, "Now is not the time for panic, the source of this sheer folly. Could a man like you talk this way were he not panicked, fearful of losing people's respect

Dharma|doṣa|prasaṅgena lokasy' ânatiśaṅkayā
kathaṃ hy etad asaṃbhrāntas tvad|vidho vaktum arhati?
Yathā daivam a|śauṇḍīraṃ śauṇḍīraḥ kṣatriya|ṛṣabhaḥ
kiṃ nāma kṛpaṇaṃ daivam a|śaktam abhiśaṃsasi?
Pāpayos tu kathaṃ nāma
tayoḥ śaṅkā na vidyate?
santi dharm'|ôpadhāḥ ślakṣṇā
dharm'|ātman kiṃ na budhyase
Loka|vidviṣṭam ārabdhaṃ tvad|anyasy' âbhiṣecanam
yen' êyam āgatā dvaidhaṃ tava buddhir mahī|pate
sa hi ‹dharmo› mama dveṣyaḥ prasaṅgād yasya muhyasi?
20.10 Yady api pratipattis te daivī c' âpi tayor matam
tath" âpy upekṣaṇīyaṃ te na me tad api rocate.
Viklavo vīrya|hīno yaḥ sa daivam anuvartate
vīrāḥ saṃbhāvit'|ātmāno na daivaṃ paryupāsate.
Daivaṃ puruṣa|kāreṇa yaḥ samarthaḥ prabādhitum
na daivena vipann'|ârthaḥ puruṣaḥ so 'vasīdati.
Drakṣyanti tv adya daivasya pauruṣaṃ puruṣasya ca
daiva|mānuṣayor adya vyaktā vyaktir bhaviṣyati.
Adya mat|pauruṣa|hataṃ daivaṃ drakṣyanti vai janāḥ
yad daivād āhataṃ te 'dya dṛṣṭaṃ rājy'|âbhiṣecanam.
20.15 Atyaṅkuśam iv' ôddāmaṃ gajaṃ mada|bal'|ôddhatam
pradhāvitam ahaṃ daivaṃ pauruṣeṇa nivartaye.
Loka|pālāḥ samastās te n' âdya Rām'|âbhiṣecanam
na ca kṛtsnās trayo lokā vihanyuḥ kiṃ punaḥ pitā.
Yair vivāsas tav' âraṇye mitho rājan samarthitaḥ
araṇye te vivatsyanti catur|daśa samās tathā.
Ahaṃ tad|āśāṃ chetsyāmi pitus tasyāś ca yā tava
abhiṣeka|vighātena putra|rājyāya vartate.

because of some infraction of righteousness? You are a bull among *kshátriya*, as powerful as fate is powerless. How in the world can you blame fate, a contemptible, feeble thing?

How is it you harbor no suspicion of those two evil people? Don't you know, my righteous brother, that there are cunning people who wear the guise of righteousness? A thing the whole world would find despicable is under way; someone other than you is to be consecrated. I despise that 'righteousness,' my king, which has so altered your thinking, and about which you are deluded. Even if you think 20.10
it fate that framed this plot of theirs, still you must reject it. I cannot approve of this course at all. For it is only the weak and cowardly who submit to fate; heroic men, strong of heart, do not humble themselves before fate. A man able to counter fate with manly effort does not give up for all that fate may frustrate his purposes. No, today the people will see the power of fate and the power of man. Today the disparity between the two will be clearly revealed. Today they will see fate checked by my power, just as they saw your royal consecration checked by fate.

By my power I will turn back fate that is running wild, 20.15
like a careering elephant beyond control of the goad, in a frenzy of rut and might. Not all the gods who guard the world, Rama, not the entire three worlds—much less our father—could prevent your consecration today. Those who conspired to banish you to the wilderness, your majesty, will themselves be exiled to the wilderness for fourteen years. I shall crush their hopes, Father's and that woman's, of making her son the king by overturning your consecration. The might of fate in aid of one fallen within my mighty grasp

Mad|balena viruddhāya na syād daiva|balaṃ tathā
prabhaviṣyati duḥkhāya yath" ôgraṃ pauruṣaṃ mama.
Ūrdhvaṃ varṣa|sahasr'|ânte prajāpālyam anantaram
ārya|putrāḥ kariṣyanti vana|vāsaṃ gate tvayi.
Pūrva|rāja|rṣi|vṛttyā hi vana|vāso vidhīyate
prajā nikṣipya putreṣu putravat paripālane.
Sa ced rājany anek'|âgre rājya|vibhrama|śaṅkayā
n' âivam icchasi dharm'|ātman rājyaṃ Rāma tvam ātmani:
Pratijāne ca te vīra mā bhūvaṃ vīra|lokabhāk
rājyaṃ ca tava rakṣeyam ahaṃ vel" êva sāgaram.
Maṅgalair abhiṣiñcasva tatra tvaṃ vyāpṛto bhava
aham eko mahī|pālān alaṃ vārayituṃ balāt.
Na śobh"|ârthāv imau bāhū na dhanur bhūṣaṇāya me
n' âsir ābandhan'|ârthāya na śarāḥ stambha|hetavaḥ.
Amitra|daman'|ârthaṃ me sarvam etac catuṣṭayam
na c' âhaṃ kāmaye 'tyarthaṃ yaḥ syāc chatrur mato mama.
Asinā tīkṣṇa|dhāreṇa vidyuc|calita|varcasā
pragṛhītena vai śatruṃ vajriṇaṃ vā na kalpaye.
Khaḍga|niṣpeṣa|niṣpiṣṭair gahanā duścarā ca me
hasty|aśva|nara|hast'|ōru|śirobhir bhavitā mahī.
Khaḍga|dhārā hatā me 'dya dīpyamānā iv' ādrayaḥ
patiṣyanti dvipā bhūmau meghā iva sa|vidyutaḥ.
Baddha|godh"|âṅguli|trāṇe pragṛhīta|śar'|āsane
kathaṃ puruṣamānī syāt puruṣāṇāṃ mayi sthite?

will be no match for my terrible power and the sorrow it will work. Later on, many years from now, my brother, when your sons in turn are protecting the subjects, you can go to live in the forest. For, according to the ways of the royal seers of old, living in the forest is prescribed only after entrusting one's subjects to one's sons, to protect as though they were their very own sons.

If perhaps you are unwilling to assume the kingship without the king's wholehearted support, righteous Rama, for fear of a revolt against your kingship: I swear to you, my heroic brother, may I never come to share in the afterworld of heroes if I do not guard the kingship for you as the shore guards the ocean. Have yourself consecrated with the holy implements; busy yourself with that. I shall be able all on my own to repulse any kings by force. Not for beauty's sake are these two arms nor is this bow merely to adorn me; this sword is not for the sake of ornament nor are these arrows just for filling a quiver. All four things exist for subduing my enemies, and I am not very eager that anyone be thought my match.

With my sword held ready, its blade sharp and lustrous as flashing lightning, I count no one my match, be he Indra himself, god of the thunderbolt. Soon the earth will be impassable, knee-deep in the trunks, flanks and heads of elephants, horses, and men hacked off by the strokes of my sword. Like clouds with lightning playing about them, like mountains engulfed in flames, elephants will drop to the ground today under the blows of my sword. When I stand before them with my bow held ready, with my armguards and finger-guards strapped on, how could any of

Bahubhiś c' âikam atyasyann ekena ca bahūñ janān
viniyokṣyāmy ahaṃ bāṇān nṛ|vāji|gaja|marmasu.
Adya me 'stra|prabhāvasya prabhāvaḥ prabhaviṣyati
rājñaś c' âprabhutāṃ kartuṃ prabhutvaṃ ca tava prabho.
Adya candana|sārasya keyūr'|âmokṣaṇasya ca
vasūnāṃ ca vimokṣasya suhṛdāṃ pālanasya ca.
Anurūpāv imau bāhū Rāma karma kariṣyataḥ
abhiṣecana|vighnasya kartṝṇāṃ te nivāraṇe.
20.35 Bravīhi ko 'dy' âiva mayā viyujyatāṃ
tav' âsuhṛt prāṇa|yaśaḥ|suhṛj|janaiḥ?
yathā tav' êyaṃ vasudhā vaśe bhavet
tath" âiva māṃ śādhi tav' âsmi kiṃkaraḥ.»
Vimṛjya bāṣpaṃ parisāntvya c' âsakṛt
sa Lakṣmaṇaṃ Rāghava|vaṃśa|vardhanaḥ
uvāca: «pitrye vacane vyavasthitaṃ
nibodha mām eṣa hi saumya sat|pathaḥ.»

21.1 Taṃ samīkṣya tv avahitaṃ pitur nirdeśa|pālane
Kausalyā bāṣpa|saṃruddhā vaco dharmiṣṭham abravīt:
«Adṛṣṭa|duḥkho dharm'|ātmā sarva|bhūta|priyaṃ|vadaḥ
mayi jāto Daśarathāt katham uñchena vartayet?
Yasya bhṛtyāś ca dāsāś ca mṛṣṭāny annāni bhuñjate
kathaṃ sa bhokṣyate nātho vane mūla|phalāny ayam?
Ka etac chraddadhec chrutvā kasya vā na bhaved bhayam
guṇavān dayito rājño Rāghavo yad vivāsyate?
21.5 Tvayā vihīnām iha māṃ śok'|âgnir atulo mahān
pradhakṣyati yathā kakṣaṃ citra|bhānur him'|âtyaye.
Kathaṃ hi dhenuḥ svaṃ vatsaṃ

those men fancy himself a man? Shooting now one man with many, now many men with one, I will ply my arrows in the vitals of men, horses and elephants. Today the power of my all-powerful weapons shall prevail to strip the king of his power and make it over to you, my lord. Today these arms of mine, well suited for wearing sandalwood cream, sporting bracelets, lavishing wealth and protecting friends as well, will do their job, Rama, repulsing those who stand in the way of your consecration. Just tell me, which of your 20.35
enemies should I separate this very day from his fame, his loved ones and his life? Just instruct me what to do to bring the land under your control. I am your servant."

Wiping Lákshmana's tears away and comforting him all the while, the heir of the Rághava dynasty said, "You must understand, dear brother, that I am resolved to obey my father's command, for such is the way of the good."

When Kausálya saw that he was resolved to follow his 21.1
father's orders, she said to her most righteous son, through her choking sobs: "How will he who has never known sorrow, who is righteous and speaks kindly to all creatures, how will the son I bore to Dasha·ratha live by gleaning grain? When his servants and slaves are eating delicacies, how can the master eat fruit and roots in the forest? Who would believe it, who would not be seized with terror, to hear that virtuous Rághava, the king's beloved, is being exiled? If you 21.5
leave me here, a raging fire of grief, unlike any other, will consume me as the many-colored flames of fire consume

gacchantaṃ n' ânugacchati?
ahaṃ tv" ânugamiṣyāmi
yatra putra gamiṣyasi.»

Tathā nigaditaṃ mātrā tad vākyaṃ puruṣa|ṛṣabhaḥ
śrutvā Rāmo 'bravīd vākyaṃ mātaraṃ bhṛśa|duḥkhitām.
«Kaikeyyā vañcito rājā mayi c' âraṇyam āśrite
bhavatyā ca parityakto na nūnaṃ vartayiṣyati.
Bhartuḥ kila parityāgo nṛśaṃsaḥ kevalaṃ striyāḥ
sa bhavatyā na kartavyo manas" âpi vigarhitaḥ.
Yāvaj jīvati Kākutsthaḥ pitā me jagatī|patiḥ
śuśrūṣā kriyatāṃ tāvat sa hi dharmaḥ sanātanaḥ.»
Evam uktā tu Rāmeṇa Kausalyā śubha|darśanā.
«tath" êty» uvācāsuprītā Rāmam a|kliṣṭa|kāriṇam.

Evam uktas tu vacanaṃ Rāmo dharmabhṛtāṃ varaḥ
bhūyas tām abravīd vākyaṃ mātaraṃ bhṛśa|duḥkhitām:
«Mayā c' âiva bhavatyā ca kartavyaṃ vacanaṃ pituḥ
rājā bhartā guruḥ śreṣṭhaḥ sarveṣām īśvaraḥ prabhuḥ.
Imāni tu mah"|âraṇye vihṛtya nava pañca ca
varṣāṇi parama|prītaḥ sthāsyāmi vacane tava.»
Evam uktā priyaṃ putraṃ bāṣpa|pūrṇ'|ānanā tadā
uvāca param'|ārtā tu Kausalyā putra|vatsalā:
«Āsāṃ Rāma sapatnīnāṃ vastuṃ madhye na me kṣamam
naya mām api Kākutstha vanaṃ vanyaṃ mṛgīṃ yathā
yadi te gamane buddhiḥ kṛtā pitur apekṣayā.»

Tāṃ tathā rudatīṃ Rāmo rudan vacanam abravīt:
«jīvantyā hi striyā bhartā daivataṃ prabhur eva ca
bhavatyā mama c' âiva âdya rājā prabhavati prabhuḥ.
Bharataś c' âpi dharm'|ātmā

a thicket when winter is past. How would a cow not follow her calf if it wanders off? I must follow you, my son, wherever you may go."

When he heard what his mother said in her deep sorrow, Rama, bull among men, addressed her with these words: "Deceived by Kaikéyi, and with me withdrawn to the wilderness, the king will surely not survive if you too should desert him. For a woman to desert her husband is wickedness pure and simple. You must not do so despicable a thing, not even think it. As long as my father and lord of 21.10
the world, Kakútstha, lives, he must be shown obedience, for that is the eternal way of righteousness." From these words of Rama's, Kausálya recognized what was proper. "So be it," she replied, though without joy, to tireless Rama.

At this, Rama, champion of righteousness, once more addressed his mother in her deep sorrow: "Both you and I must do as father bids. He is king, husband, foremost *guru*, lord and master of us all. Once I have passed these nine years and five in the great wilderness, I shall stand again at your bidding, with the deepest joy." Tormented by his words, 21.15
her face flooded with tears, Kausálya replied to her son, whom she so loved: "Rama, I cannot bear to stay among my co-wives. Take me, too, Kakútstha, to the wilderness like a wild deer if, out of regard for your father, your heart is set on going."

As she wept like this, Rama wept, too, and said, "So long as she lives, a woman's one deity and master is her husband. And today the king our master is exercising his mastery over you and me. Bhárata is righteous, too, and speaks kindly to all creatures. He will respect your wishes, for he has always

sarva|bhūta|priyaṃvadaḥ
bhavatīm anuvarteta
sa hi dharma|rataḥ sadā.
Yathā mayi tu niṣkrānte putra”|sokena pārthivaḥ
śramaṃ n’ âvāpnuyāt kiṃ cid apramattā tathā kuru.
21.20 Vrat’|ôpavāsa|niratā yā nārī param’ ôttamā
bhartāraṃ n’ ânuvarteta sā ca pāpa|gatir bhavet.
Śuśrūṣam eva kurvīta bhartuḥ priya|hite ratā
eṣa dharmaḥ purā dṛṣṭo loke vede śrutaḥ smṛtaḥ.
Pūjyās te mat|kṛte devi brāhmaṇāś c’ âiva su|vratāḥ
evaṃ kālaṃ pratīkṣasva mam”|āgana|kāṅkṣiṇī.
Prāpsyase paramaṃ kāmaṃ mayi praty āgate sati
yadi dharma|bhṛtāṃ śreṣṭho dhārayiṣyati jīvitam.»
Evam uktā tu Rāmeṇa bāṣpa|paryākule|kṣaṇā
Kausalyā putra|śok’|ārtā Rāmaṃ vacanam abravīt:
«gaccha putra tvam ekāgro bhadraṃ te ’stu sadā vibho.»
21.25 Tathā hi Rāmaṃ vana|vāsa|niścitaṃ
samīkṣya devī parameṇa cetasā
uvāca Rāmaṃ śubha|lakṣaṇaṃ vaco
babhūva ca svasty|ayan’|âbhikāṅkṣiṇī.

22.1 S” ÂPANĪYA TAM āyāsam upaspṛśya jalaṃ śuciḥ
cakāra mātā Rāmasya maṅgalāni manasvinī.
Svasti sādhyāś ca Viśve ca Marutaś ca maha|ṛṣayaḥ
svasti Dhātā Vidhātā ca svasti Pūṣā Bhago ’ryamā.
Ṛtavaś c’ âiva pakṣāś ca māsāḥ saṃvatsarāḥ kṣapāḥ
dināni ca muhūrtāś ca svasti kurvantu te sadā.
Smṛtir dhṛtiś ca dharmaś ca pāntu tvāṃ putra sarvataḥ
Skandaś ca bhagavān devaḥ Somaś ca sa|Bṛhaspatiḥ.

been earnest in doing what is right. When I have departed you must take care to ensure that the king not trouble himself in the least with grief for his son. Even the most excellent 21.20
of women, one who earnestly undertakes vows and fasts, will come to a bad end if she does not respect her husband's wishes. A woman must show her husband obedience and earnestly strive to please and benefit him. Such is the way of righteousness discovered long ago, revealed in the Veda and handed down in the world. The *brahman*s likewise, who are true to their vows, you must reverence for my sake, my lady. In this way you will pass the time, awaiting my return. Your fondest wish will be fulfilled when I return, if the champion of righteousness should remain alive."

So Rama spoke, and Kausálya, tortured by grief for her son, her eyes dimmed by tears, replied, "Go, my mighty son, and be careful. My blessings with you always." When 21.25
the queen saw how determined Rama was to live in the forest, she made her prayers for him from the bottom of her heart and prepared to bestow her blessings on his journey.

Rama's mother restrained her anguish and took a sip 22.1
of water. Now pure again and in better spirits, she began to make her prayers for him. "May the *sadhyas* bless you and the All-Gods, the Maruts and the great seers. May Dhatri and Vidhátri bless you, Pushan, Bhaga and Áryaman, too. May the years and seasons bless you always, the months and half-months, the nights and days and hours. May your learning, fortitude and righteousness protect you everywhere, my son. May Skanda protect you, the blessed god, and Soma and

22.5 Sapta|ṛṣayo Nāradaś ca te tvāṃ rakṣantu sarvataḥ
nakṣatrāṇi ca sarvāṇi grahāś ca saha|devatāḥ
mahā|vane vicarato muni|veṣasya dhīmataḥ.
Plavagā vṛścikā daṃśā maśakāś c' âiva kānane
sarīsṛpāś ca kīṭāś ca mā bhūvan gahane tava.
Mahā|dvipāś ca siṃhāś ca vyāghrā ṛkṣāś ca daṃṣṭriṇaḥ
mahiṣāḥ śṛṅgiṇo raudrā na te druhyantu putraka.
Nṛ|māṃsa|bhojanā raudrā ye c' ânye sattva|jātayaḥ
mā ca tvāṃ himsiṣuḥ putra mayā saṃpūjitās tv iha.

Āgamās te śivāḥ santu sidhyantu ca parākramāḥ
sarva|saṃpattayo Rāma svastimān gaccha putraka.
22.10 Svasti te 'stv āntarikṣebhyaḥ pārthivebhyaḥ punaḥ punaḥ
sarvebhyaś c' âiva devebhyo ye ca te paripanthinaḥ.
Sarva|loka|prabhur Brahmā bhūta|bhartā tatha"îṣayaḥ
ye ca śeṣāḥ surās te tvāṃ rakṣantu vana|vāsinam.»
Iti mālyaiḥ sura|gaṇān gandhaiś c' âpi yaśasvinī
stutibhiś c' ânurūpābhir ānarc' āyata|locanā.
«Yan maṅgalaṃ sahasra'|âkṣe sarva|deva|namas|kṛte
Vṛtra|nāśe samabhavat tat te bhavatu maṅgalam.
Yan maṅgalaṃ Suparṇasya Vinat" âkalpayat purā
amṛtaṃ prārthayānasya tat te bhavatu maṅgalam.»
22.15 Oṣadhīṃ c' âpi siddh'|ârthāṃ viśalya|karaṇīṃ śubhām
cakāra rakṣāṃ Kausalyā mantrair abhijajāpa ca.
Ānamya mūrdhni c' āghrāya pariṣvajya yaśasvinī
avadat: «putra siddh'|ârtho gaccha Rāma yathā|sukham.
A|rogaṃ sarva|siddh'|ârtham Ayodhyāṃ punar āgatam

Brihas·pati. May the Seven Seers and Nárada guard you 21.5
everywhere, my wise son, may all the constellations, and all the planets with their presiding deities, as you wander in a sage's garb through the great forest. May you not be troubled by monkeys or scorpions, by gnats or flies in the woods, by snakes or insects in the jungle thickets. May the huge elephants not harm you, my dear son, nor the lions, tigers, bears, boars or ferocious horned buffalo. May the other ferocious breeds of creatures that feed on human flesh not injure you, my son, for these fervid prayers I now offer them.

May your way be safe, may your courage prevail, may all good things be plentiful, Rama. Go with my blessings, dear son. May my blessings protect you hour by hour from all 22.10
the things on earth, in the sky or in heaven that might beset your path. May Brahma, the sustainer of creatures and lord of all the worlds, may the seers and the rest of the gods guard you while you are living in the forest." The glorious large-eyed woman worshipped the hosts of gods with garlands and incense and fitting hymns of praise. "May you have the same good fortune as thousand-eyed Indra, to whom all gods bow, when he slew the demon Vritra. May you have the same good fortune Vínata secured for Supárna, when he went in quest of the nectar."

Then, of an herb of proven worth, a lucky herb that could 22.15
ward off thorns, she made an amulet and whispered Vedic verses over it. The glorious woman had him bow his head, she kissed him on the forehead and embraced him, saying, "Go in happiness, Rama my son, and may you achieve success. How happy I shall be to see you, my child, back

paśyāmi tvāṃ sukhaṃ vatsa susthitaṃ rāja|veśmani.
May”|ârcitā deva|gaṇāḥ śiv’|ādayo
maha|ṛṣayo bhūta|mahā|sur’|ôragāḥ
abhiprayātasya vanaṃ cirāya te
hitāni kāṅkṣantu diśaś ca Rāghava.»
Iť îva c’ âśru|pratipūrṇa|locanā
samāpya ca svasty|ayanaṃ yathā|vidhi
pradakṣiṇaṃ c’ âiva cakāra Rāghavaṃ
punaḥ punaś c’ âpi nipīḍya sasvaje.
22.20 Tathā tu devyā sa kṛta|pradakṣiṇo
nipīḍya mātuś caraṇau punaḥ punaḥ
jagāma Sītā|nilayaṃ mahā|yaśāḥ
sa Rāghavaḥ prajvalitaḥ svayā śriyā.

again in Ayódhya, healthy, successful and firmly established in the house of the king. I have worshipped the hosts of gods, Shiva and all the others, the great seers, the spirits, great *ásuras*, and serpents. When you have gone to the forest, Rághava, may they, and every quarter of space, ever promote your welfare." And so, her eyes brimming with tears, she concluded her blessings for his journey, as custom required. Then she reverently circled Rághava, took him in her arms, and pressed him to her bosom again and again. After the 22.20
queen had circled him glorious Rághava again and again pressed his head to his mother's feet. Then he proceeded to Sita's residence, ablaze with his own royal splendor.

23–28
SITA AND LÁKSHMANA

23.1 Abhivādya tu Kausalyāṃ Rāmaḥ saṃprasthito vanam
kṛta|svasty|ayano mātrā dharmiṣṭhe vartmani sthitaḥ.
Virājayan rāja|suto rāja|mārgaṃ narair vṛtam
hṛdayāny āmamanth' êva janasya guṇavattayā.
Vaidehī c' âpi tat sarvaṃ na śuśrāva tapasvinī
tad eva hṛdi tasyāś ca yauvarājy'|âbhiṣecanam.
Deva|kāryaṃ sma sā kṛtvā kṛtajñā hṛṣṭa|cetanā
abhijñā rāja|dharmāṇāṃ rāja|putraṃ pratīkṣate.
23.5 Praviveś' âtha Rāmas tu sva|veśma suvibhūṣitam
prahṛṣṭa|jana|saṃpūrṇaṃ hriyā kiṃ cid avāṅ|mukhaḥ.

Atha Sītā samutpatya vepamānā ca taṃ patim
apaśyac choka|saṃtaptaṃ cintā|vyākulit'|êndriyam.
Vivarṇa|vadanaṃ dṛṣṭvā taṃ prasvinnam amarṣaṇam
āha duḥkh'|âbhisaṃtaptā: «kim idānīm idaṃ prabho?
Adya Bārhaspataḥ śrīmān yuktaḥ Puṣyo na Rāghava
procyate brāhmaṇaiḥ prājñaiḥ kena tvam asi durmanāḥ?
Na te śata|śalākena jala|phena|nibhena ca
āvṛtaṃ vadanaṃ valgu chatreṇa' âbhivirājate
23.10 Vyajanābhyāṃ ca mukhyābhyāṃ śata|patra|nibh'|ēkṣaṇam
candra|haṃsa|prakāśābhyāṃ vījyate na tav' ānanam

Vāgmino vandinaś c' âpi prahṛṣṭās tvaṃ nara|ṛṣabha
stuvanto n' âdya dṛśyante maṅgalaiḥ sūta|māgadhāḥ
Na te kṣaudraṃ ca dadhi ca brāhmaṇā veda|pāragāḥ
mūrdhni mūrdh"|āvasiktasya dadhati sma vidhānataḥ

So Kausálya bade him farewell and Rama did obeisance to her, ready to depart for the forest, keeping to the path of righteousness. Along the royal highway crowded with men, the prince went illuminating it and melting the hearts of the people, it seemed, with all his virtues. Poor Vaidéhi had heard nothing of all this; she still believed he was being consecrated as prince regent. She knew the rites for the gods and had performed them in deep delight. Thus she waited for the prince, knowing the kingly attributes to expect. As Rama entered his residence—still decorated and thronged with delighted people—he lowered his head a little, in shame. 23.1 23.5

Sita started up and began to tremble as she looked at her husband consumed with grief, his senses numb with anxious care. When she saw how his face was drained of color, how he sweated and chafed, she was consumed with sorrow. "What is the meaning of this, my lord?" she asked. Today was surely the day for which the learned *brahman*s had forecast the conjunction of Pushya, the majestic constellation ruled by Brihas·pati. Why are you so sad, Rághava? The hundred-ribbed parasol with its hue of white-capped water is not throwing its shade upon your handsome face. Your face, with eyes like the hundred-petalled lotus, is not fanned by the pair of splendid fly whisks, the color of the moon or the wild goose. 23.10

And I see no eloquent panegyrists, bull among men, singing your praises in delight, no bards or genealogists with their auspicious recitation. Nor have the *brahman*s, masters of the Vedas, sprinkled your head and poured honey and curds upon it, as custom requires. No one wishes to follow

Na tvāṃ prakṛtayaḥ sarvā śreṇī|mukhyāś ca bhūṣitāḥ
anuvrajitum icchanti paura|jānapadās tathā
Caturbhir vega|saṃpannair hayaiḥ kāñcana|bhūṣaṇaiḥ
mukhyaḥ Puṣya|ratho yuktaḥ kiṃ na gacchati te 'grataḥ?
23.15 Na hastī c' âgrataḥ śrīmāṃs tava lakṣaṇa|pūjitaḥ
prayāṇe lakṣyate vīra kṛṣṇa|megha|giri|prabhaḥ
Na ca kāñcana|citraṃ te paśyāmi priya|darśana
bhadr'|āsanaṃ puraskṛtya yāntaṃ vīra|puraḥsaram
Abhiṣeko yadā sajjaḥ kim idānīm idaṃ tava?
a|pūrvo mukha|varṇaś ca na praharṣaś ca lakṣyate»

It' îva vilapantīṃ tāṃ provāca Raghu|nandanaḥ:
«Sīte tatra|bhavāṃs tāta pravrājayati māṃ vanam.
Kule mahati saṃbhūte dharmajñe dharma|cāriṇi
śṛṇu Jānaki yen' êdaṃ krameṇ' âbhyāgataṃ mama.
23.20 Rājñā satya|pratijñena pitrā Daśarathena me
Kaikeyyai prīta|manasā purā dattau mahā|varau.
Tay" âdya mama sajje 'sminn abhiṣeke nṛp'|ôdyate
pracoditaḥ sasamayo dharmeṇa pratinirjitaḥ.
Catur|daśa hi varṣāṇi vastavyaṃ Daṇḍake mayā
pitrā me Bharataś c' âpi yauvarājye niyojitaḥ
so 'haṃ tvām āgato draṣṭuṃ prasthito vijanaṃ vanam.

in your train, not the officials, nor the heads of guilds in their finery, nor the people of the city and provinces. How is it the splendid Pushya chariot does not precede you, with its team of four swift horses with trappings of gold? I see no 23.15
sign of the royal elephant, revered for its auspicious marks and resembling a mountain black with clouds. It is not leading your procession, my mighty husband. Nor do I see your escort, my handsome and mighty husband, proceeding with the gold-wrought throne held before them. What can all this mean, when your consecration is already under way? Never before has your face had such color, and I see no sign of delight."

Such were her anxious words, and the delight of the Raghus replied to her: "Sita, my honored father is banishing me to the forest. O Jánaki, you are the daughter of a great house, you know what is right and always practice it. Listen to the course of events that has brought this upon me. Once, long ago, when Kaikéyi had found favor with him, 23.20
my father King Dasha·ratha, a man true to his promise, granted her two great boons. Today, when my consecration was already under way at the instigation of the king, she pressed him for them. Since he had made an agreement, he was compelled by righteousness. For fourteen years I must live in Dándaka, while my father will appoint Bhárata prince regent. I have come to see you before I leave for the desolate forest.

Bharatasya samīpe te n' âhaṃ kathyaḥ kadā cana
ṛddhi|yuktā hi puruṣā na sahante para|stavam
tasmān na te guṇāḥ kathyā Bharatasy' âgrato mama.
N' âpi tvaṃ tena bhartavyā viśeṣeṇa kadā cana
anukūlatayā śakyaṃ samīpe tasya vartitum.
23.25 Ahaṃ c' âpi pratijñāṃ tāṃ guroḥ samanupālayan
vanam ady' âiva yāsyāmi sthirā bhava manasvini.
Yāte ca mayi kalyāṇi vanaṃ muni|niṣevitam
vrat'|ôpavāsa|ratayā bhavitavyaṃ tvay" ânaghe.
Kālyam utthāya devānāṃ kṛtvā pūjāṃ yathā|vidhi
vanditavyo Daśarathaḥ pitā mama nar'|ēśvaraḥ.
Mātā ca mama Kausalyā vṛddhā saṃtāpa|karśitā
dharmam ev' âgrataḥ kṛtvā tvattaḥ saṃmānam arhati.
Vanditavyāś ca te nityaṃ yāḥ śeṣā mama mātaraḥ
sneha|praṇaya|saṃbhogaiḥ samā hi mama mātaraḥ.
23.30 Bhrātṛ|putra|samau c' âpi draṣṭavyau ca viśeṣataḥ
tvayā Bharata|śatrughnau prāṇaiḥ priyatarau mama.
Vipriyaṃ na ca kartavyaṃ Bharatasya kadā cana
sa hi rājā prabhuś c' âiva deśasya ca kulasya ca.
Ārādhitā hi śīlena prayatnaiś c' ôpasevitāḥ
rājānaḥ saṃprasīdanti prakupyanti viparyaye.
Aurasān api putrān hi tyajanty a|hita|kāriṇaḥ
samarthān saṃpragṛhṇanti janān api nar'|âdhipāḥ.
Ahaṃ gamiṣyāmi mahā|vanaṃ priye
tvayā hi vastavyam ih' îva bhāmini
yathā vyalīkaṃ kuruṣe na kasya cit
tathā tvayā kāryam idaṃ vaco mama.»

You are never to boast of me in the presence of Bhárata. Men in power cannot bear to hear others praised, and so you must never boast of my virtues in front of Bhárata. You must not ever expect to receive any special treatment from him. Life with him will be possible only by constant acquiescence. I will safeguard my *guru*'s promise and leave 23.25
this very day for the forest. Be strong, my sensible wife. When I have gone to the forest where sages make their home, my precious, blameless wife, you must earnestly undertake vows and fasts. You must rise early and worship the gods according to custom and then pay homage to my father Dasha·ratha, lord of men. And my aged mother Kausálya, who is tormented by misery, deserves your respect as well, for she has subordinated all to righteousness. The rest of my mothers, too, must always receive your homage. My mothers are all equal in my eyes for their love, affection and care.

And what is most important, you must look on Bhárata 23.30
and Shatrúghna as your brother and your son, for they are dearer to me than life itself. You must never show opposition to Bhárata, for he is now both king of the country and master of our House. Kings show their favor when they are pleased with good conduct and sedulously attended to—and if they are not, they grow angry. Lords of men will repudiate their sons, their own flesh and blood, if they serve them ill, and will adopt even strangers, should they prove capable. My beloved, I am going to the great forest, and you must stay here. You must do as I tell you, my lovely, and not give offense to anyone."

24.1 EVAM UKTĀ TU Vaidehī priy'|ârhā priya|vādinī
praṇayād eva saṃkruddhā bhartāram idam abravīt:
«Ārya|putra pitā mātā bhrātā putras tathā snuṣā
svāni puṇyāni bhuñjānāḥ svaṃ svaṃ bhāgyam upāsate.
Bhartur bhāgyaṃ tu bhāry" âikā prāpnoti puruṣa|ṛṣabha
ataś c' âiv' âham ādiṣṭā vane vastavyam ity api.
Na pitā n' ātmajo n' ātmā na mātā na sakhī|janaḥ
iha pretya ca nārīṇāṃ patir eko gatiḥ sadā.
24.5 Yadi tvaṃ prasthito durgaṃ vanam ady' âiva Rāghava
agratas te gamiṣyāmi mṛdnantī kuśa|kaṇṭakān.
Īrṣyā|roṣau bahiṣkṛtya bhukta|śeṣam iv' ôdakam
naya māṃ vīra viśrabdhaḥ pāpaṃ mayi na vidyate.
Prāsād'|âgrair vimānair vā vaihāyasa|gatena vā
sarv'|âvasthā|gatā bhartuḥ pāda|cchāyā viśiṣyate.
Anuśiṣṭāsmi mātrā ca pitrā ca vividh'|āśrayam
n' âsmi saṃprati vaktavyā vartitavyaṃ yathā mayā.
Sukhaṃ vane nivatsyāmi yath" âiva bhavane pituḥ
acintayantī trīṃl lokāṃś cintayantī pati|vratam.
24.10 Śuśrūṣamāṇā te nityaṃ niyatā brahma|cāriṇī
saha raṃsye tvayā vīra vaneṣu madhu|gandhiṣu!

So Rama spoke, and Vaidéhi, who always spoke kindly 24.1
to her husband and deserved kindness from him, grew angry just because she loved him, and said: "My lord, a man's father, his mother, brother, son or daughter-in-law all experience the effects of their own past deeds and suffer an individual fate. But a wife, and she alone, bull among men, must share her husband's fate. Therefore I, too, have been ordered to live in the forest. It is not her father or mother, not her son or friends or herself, but her husband, and he alone, who gives a woman permanent refuge in this world and after death. If you must leave this very day for the track- 23.5
less forest, Rághava, I will go in front of you, softening the thorns and sharp *kusha* grass.

Cast out your anger and resentment, like so much water left after drinking one's fill. Do not be reluctant to take me, my mighty husband. There is no evil in me. The shadow of a husband's feet in any circumstances surpasses the finest mansions, an aerial chariot, or even flying through the sky. My mother and father instructed me in all these different questions. I do not have to be told now the proper way to behave. I shall live as happily in the forest as if it were my father's house, caring for nothing in the three worlds but to be faithful to my husband. I will obey you always and 24.10
practice self-discipline and chastity. What pleasures I shall share with you, my mighty husband, in the honey-scented forests!

Tvaṃ hi kartuṃ vane śakto Rāma saṃparipālanam
anyasya vai janasy' êha kiṃ punar mama mānada?
Phala|mūl'|âśanā nityaṃ bhaviṣyāmi na saṃśayaḥ
na te duḥkhaṃ kariṣyāmi nivasantī saha tvayā.
Icchāmi saritaḥ śailān palvalāni vanāni ca
draṣṭuṃ sarvatra nirbhītā tvayā nāthena dhīmatā.
Haṃsa|kāraṇḍav'|ākīrṇāḥ padminīḥ sādhu|puṣpitāḥ
iccheyaṃ sukhinī draṣṭuṃ tvayā vīreṇa saṃgatā.
24.15 Saha tvayā viśāl'âkṣa raṃsye parama|nandinī
evaṃ varṣa|sahasrāṇāṃ śataṃ vāhaṃ tvayā saha!
Svarge 'pi ca vinā vāso bhavitā yadi Rāghava
tvayā mama nara|vyāghra n' âhaṃ tam api rocaye.
Ahaṃ gamiṣyāmi vanaṃ sudurgamaṃ
mṛg'|āyutaṃ vānara|vāraṇair yutam
vane nivatsyāmi yathā pitur gṛhe
tav' îva pādāv upagṛhya saṃyatā.
An|anya|bhāvām anurakta|cetasaṃ
tvayā viyuktāṃ maraṇāya niścitām
nayasva māṃ sādhu kuruṣva yācanāṃ
na te may" âto gurutā bhaviṣyati.»
Tathā bruvāṇām api dharma|vatsalo
na ca sma Sītāṃ nṛ|varo ninīṣati
uvāca c' âināṃ bahu saṃnivartane
vane nivāsasya ca duḥkhitāṃ prati.

25.1 Sa evaṃ bruvatīṃ Sītāṃ dharmajño dharma|vatsalaḥ
nivartan'|ârthe dharm'|ātmā vākyam etad uvāca ha.
«Sīte mahā|kulīn" âsi dharme ca niratā sadā
ih' ācara sva|dharmaṃ tvaṃ mā yathā manasaḥ sukham.
Sīte yathā tvāṃ vakṣyāmi tathā kāryaṃ tvaya" âbale

O Rama, bestower of honor, you have the power to protect any other person in the forest. Why then not me? You need not doubt that I can survive on nothing but fruit and roots; I shall not cause you any trouble by living with you. I want to see the streams and mountains, the ponds and forests, and nowhere shall I be afraid with my wise husband to defend me. I want to see the lotus ponds in full bloom, blanketed with geese and ducks, happy in your company, my mighty husband. What pleasures I shall share with you, 24.15
my large-eyed husband, what bliss for me to be with you like this, were it for a hundred thousand years! If I were to be offered a place to live in heaven itself, Rághava, tiger among men, I would refuse it if you were not there. I will go to the trackless forest teeming with deer, monkeys and elephants, and live there as if in my father's house, clinging to your feet alone, in strict self-discipline. I love no one else; my heart is so attached to you that were we to be parted I am resolved to die. Take me, oh please grant my request. I shall not be a burden to you."

Despite what Sita said, the best of men, who so cherished righteousness, was still unwilling to take her, and in order to dissuade her he began to describe how painful life in the forest is.

When Sita finished speaking, the righteous prince, 25.1
who knew what was right and cherished it, attempted to dissuade her. "Sita, you are the daughter of a great house and have always been earnest in doing what is right. You must stay here and do your duty, not what your heart desires. My frail Sita, you must do as I say. There are so many

vane doṣā hi bahavo vadatas tān nibodha me.
Sīte vimucyatām eṣā vana|vāsa|kṛtā matiḥ
bahu|doṣaṃ hi kāntāraṃ ‹vanam ity› abhidhīyate.
Hita|buddhyā khalu vaco may" âitad abhidhīyate
sadā sukhaṃ na jānāmi duḥkham eva sadā vanam.
Giri|nirjhara|saṃbhūtā giri|kandara|vāsinām
siṃhānāṃ ninadā duḥkhāḥ śrotuṃ duḥkham ato vanam.
Supyate parṇa|śayyāsu svayaṃ|bhagnāsu bhūtale
rātriṣu śrama|khinnena tasmād duḥkhataraṃ vanam.

Upavāsaś ca kartavyo yathā|prāṇena Maithili
jaṭā|bhāraś ca kartavyo valkal'|âmbara|dhāriṇā.
Atīva vātas timiraṃ bubhukṣā c' âtra nityaśaḥ
bhayāni ca mahānty atra tato duḥkhataraṃ vanam.
Sarīsṛpāś ca bahavo bahu|rūpāś ca bhāmini
caranti pṛthivīṃ darpād ato dukhataraṃ vanam.
Nadī|nilayanāḥ sarpā nadī|kuṭila|gāminaḥ
tiṣṭhanty āvṛtya panthānam ato duḥkhataraṃ vanam.
Pataṃgā vṛścikāḥ kīṭā daṃśāś ca maśakaiḥ saha
bādhante nityam abale sarvaṃ duḥkham ato vanam.
Drumāḥ kaṇṭakinaś c' âiva kuśa|kāśāś ca bhāmini
vane vyākula|śākh"|âgrās tena duḥkhataraṃ vanam.
Tad alaṃ te vanaṃ gatvā kṣamaṃ na hi vanaṃ tava
vimṛśann iha paśyāmi bahu|doṣataraṃ vanam.»

hardships in the forest. Listen to me and I shall tell you. Sita, give up this notion of living in the forest. The name 'forest' is given only to wild regions where hardships abound. It is, 25.5 in fact, with your welfare at heart that I am saying this. The forest is never a place of pleasure—I know—but only of pain. There are lions that live in mountain caves; their roars are redoubled by mountain torrents and are a painful thing to hear—the forest is a place of pain. At night, worn with fatigue, one must sleep upon the ground on a bed of leaves, broken off of themselves—the forest is a place of utter pain.

And one has to fast, Máithili, to the limit of one's endurance, wear clothes of bark cloth and bear the burden of matted hair. The wind is so intense there and the darkness, too. One is always hungry and the dangers are so great—the forest is a place of utter pain. There are many creeping 25.10 creatures, of every size and shape, my lovely, ranging aggressively over the ground—the forest is a place of utter pain. There are snakes, too, that live in the rivers, moving as sinuously as rivers, and they are always there obstructing one's way—the forest is a place of utter pain. Moths, scorpions, worms, gnats and flies continually harass one, my frail Sita—the forest is wholly a place of pain. There are thorn trees, *kusha* and *kasha* grass, my lovely, and the forest is a tangle of their branches and blades—the forest is a place of utter pain. So no more of your going to the forest, you could not bear it. The more I think about it the more I see how many hardships the forest holds."

25.15 Vanaṃ tu netuṃ na kṛtā matis tadā
babhūva Rāmeṇa yadā mah”|ātmanā
na tasya Sītā vacanaṃ cakāra tat
tato ’bravīd Rāmam idaṃ suduḥkhitā.

26.1 ETAT TU VACANAṂ śrutvā Sītā Rāmasya duḥkhitā
prasakt’|âśru|mukhī mandam idaṃ vacanam abravīt.
«Ye tvayā kīrtitā doṣā vane vastavyatāṃ prati
guṇān ity eva tān viddhi tava sneha|puras|kṛtān?
Tvayā ca saha gantavyaṃ mayā guru|jan’|ājñayā
tvad|viyogena me Rāma tyaktavyam iha jīvitam.
Na ca māṃ tvat|samīpastham api śaknoti Rāghava
surāṇām īśvaraḥ Śakraḥ pradharṣayitum ojasā.
26.5 Pati|hīnā tu yā nārī na sā śakṣyati jīvitum
kāmam evaṃ|vidhaṃ Rāma tvayā mama vidarśitam.
Atha c’ âpi mahā|prājña brāhmaṇānāṃ mayā śrutam
purā pitṛ|gṛhe satyaṃ vastavyaṃ kila me vane.
Lakṣaṇibhyo dvijātibhyaḥ śrutv” âhaṃ vacanaṃ gṛhe
vana|vāsa|kṛt’|ôtsāhā nityam eva mahā|bala.
Ādeśo vana|vāsasya prāptavyaḥ sa mayā kila
sā tvayā saha tatr’ âhaṃ yāsyāmi priya n’ ânyathā.
Kṛt’|ādeśā bhaviṣyāmi gamiṣyāmi saha tvayā
kālaś c’ âyaṃ samutpannaḥ satya|vāg bhavatu dvijaḥ.
26.10 Vana|vāse hi jānāmi duḥkhāni bahudhā kila
prāpyante niyataṃ vīra puruṣair a|kṛt’|ātmabhiḥ.
Kanyayā ca pitur gehe vana|vāsaḥ śruto mayā
bhikṣiṇyāḥ sādhu|vṛttāyā mama mātur ih’ âgrataḥ.

When great Rama had thus made up his mind not to take her to the forest, Sita did not reply to him at once, but then in bitter sorrow she spoke. 25.15

S WAS OVERCOME with sorrow when she heard what Rama said. With tears trickling down her face, she answered him in a faint voice. "Do you not know that what you call the hardships of life in the forest would all be luxuries if your love accompanied them? By the order of our elders I must go with you, Rama. I would die here and now if parted from you. But if I were by your side, Rághava, not even Shakra, lord of the gods, could harm me for all his might. A woman whose husband has left her cannot go on living, regardless of what advice you give me, Rama. Besides, my wise husband, long ago in my father's house I heard the *brahman*s prophesy that some day I should have to live in the forest. The twice-born could read the marks on a person's body, my powerful husband, and from that moment at home, when I heard what they foretold, I have constantly yearned to live in the forest. 26.1 25.5

The prediction that I should have to live in the forest must some day be fulfilled. And it is with you that I would go there, my love, not otherwise. I will go with you and carry out the prediction. The moment has arrived; let the prophecy of the twice-born come true. I know that in living in the forest there is indeed much pain, my mighty husband, but it is only those who are unprepared that suffer from it. When I was a girl in my father's house I happened to hear, in the presence of my mother, all about forest life from a holy mendicant woman. And, in fact, I have begged you many 26.10

Prasāditaś ca vai pūrvaṃ tvaṃ vai bahu|vidhaṃ prabho
gamanaṃ vana|vāsasya kāṅkṣitaṃ hi saha tvayā.

Kṛta|kṣaṇ" âhaṃ bhadraṃ te gamanaṃ prati Rāghava
vana|vāsasya śūrasya caryā hi mama rocate.
Śuddha'|ātman prema|bhāvādd hi bhaviṣyāmi vikalmaṣā
bhartāram anugacchantī bhartā hi mama daivatam.
26.15 Pretya|bhāve 'pi kalyāṇaḥ saṃgamo me saha tvayā
śrutir hi śrūyate puṇyā brāhmaṇānāṃ yaśasvinām:
‹iha|loke ca pitṛbhir yā strī yasya mahā|mate
adbhir dattā sva|dharmeṇa pretya|bhāve 'pi tasya sā.›
Evam asmāt svakāṃ nārīṃ suvṛttāṃ hi pati|vratām
n' âbhirocayase netuṃ tvaṃ māṃ ken'êha hetunā?
Bhaktāṃ pati|vratāṃ dīnāṃ māṃ samāṃ sukha|duḥkhayoḥ
netum arhasi Kākutstha samāna|sukha|duḥkhinīm.
Yadi māṃ duḥkhitām evaṃ vanaṃ netuṃ na c' êcchasi
viṣam agniṃ jalaṃ v" âham āsthāsye mṛtyu|kāraṇāt.»
26.20 Evaṃ bahu|vidhaṃ taṃ sā yācate gamanaṃ prati
n' ânumene mahā|bāhus tāṃ netuṃ vijanaṃ vanam.
Evam uktā tu sā cintāṃ Maithilī samupāgatā
snāpayantīva gām uṣṇair aśrubhir nayana|cyutaiḥ.
Cintayantīṃ tathā tāṃ tu nivartayitum ātmavān
krodh'|āviṣṭāṃ tu Vaidehīṃ Kākutstho bahv asāntvayat.

times before to let us go and live together in the forest, my lord, so much do I desire it.

Please, Rághava, I have been waiting for the chance to go. I want nothing more than to serve my hero as he lives in the forest. If from feelings of love I follow you, my pure-hearted husband, I shall have no sin to answer for, because my husband is my deity. My union with you is sacred and shall 26.15
last even beyond death. There is a holy scripture, my high-minded husband, that glorious *brahman*s recite: 'When in this world, in accordance with their own customs and by means of the ritual waters, a woman's father gives her to a man, she remains his even in death.' What then is the reason you are set against taking me away from here, your own wife, a woman of good conduct and faithful to her husband? I am devoted and faithful to my husband. I have always shared your joy and sorrow, and now I am so desolate. You must take me, Kakútstha: your joy has always been mine to share, and your sorrow. If you refuse to take me to the forest despite the sorrow that I feel, I shall have no recourse but to end my life by poison, fire or water."

Though she pleaded with him in this and every other way 26.20
to be allowed to go, great-armed Rama would not consent to taking her to the desolate forest. And when he told her as much, Máithili fell to brooding, and drenched the ground, it seemed, with the hot tears that fell from her eyes. And as Vaidéhi brooded, wondering how to change his mind, anger took hold of her. But Kakútstha did not lose his self-composure and tried his best to appease her.

27.1 Sāntvyamānā tu Rāmeṇa Maithilī Janak'|ātmajā
vana|vāsa|nimittāya bhartāram idam abravīt.
Sā tam uttama|saṃvignā Sītā vipula|vakṣasaṃ
praṇayāc c' âbhimānāc ca paricikṣepa Rāghavam.
«Kiṃ tvām anyata Vaidehaḥ pitā me Mithil"|âdhipaḥ
Rāma jāmātaraṃ prāpya striyaṃ puruṣa|vigraham?
An|ṛtaṃ bala|loko 'yam ajñānād yadd hi vakṣyati
‹tejo› n' âsti paraṃ Rāme tapat' îva divākare.
27.5 Kiṃ hi kṛtvā viṣaṇṇas tvaṃ kuto vā bhayam asti te
yat parityaktu|kāmas tvaṃ mām an|anya|parāyaṇām?
Dyumatsena|sutaṃ vīra Satyavantam anuvratām
Sāvitrīm iva māṃ viddhi tvam ātma|vaśa|vartinīm?
Na tv ahaṃ manas" âpy anyaṃ draṣṭāsmi tvad|ṛte 'nagha
tvayā Rāghava gaccheyaṃ yath" ânyā kula|pāṃsanī.
Svayaṃ tu bhāryāṃ kaumārīṃ ciram adhyuṣitāṃ satīm
śailūṣa iva māṃ Rāma parebhyo dātum icchasi.
Sa mām an|ādāya vanaṃ na tvaṃ prasthātum arhasi
tapo vā yadi v" âraṇyaṃ svargo vā syāt saha tvayā.
27.10 Na ca me bhavitā tatra kaś cit pathi pariśramaḥ
pṛṣṭhatas tava gacchantyā vihāra|śayaneṣv iva.
Kuśa|kāśa|śar'|êṣīkā ye ca kaṇṭakino drumāḥ
tūl'|âjina|sama|sparśā mārge mama saha tvayā.
Mahā|vāta samuddhūtaṃ yan mām avakariṣyati
rajo ramaṇa tan manye parārdhyam iva candanam.

RAMA TRIED TO appease her, but Máithili, daughter of 27.1
Jánaka, addressed her husband once more in the hope of living in the forest. Sita was deeply distraught, and out of love and indignation she began to revile broad-chested Rághava.

"What could my father Vaidéha, the lord of Míthila, have had in mind when he took you for a son-in-law, Rama, a woman with the body of a man? How the people lie in their ignorance. Rama's 'great power' is not at all like the power of the blazing sun that brings the day. On what grounds 27.5
are you so reluctant, what are you afraid of that you are ready to desert me, who has no other refuge? Do you not know, my mighty husband, that I bow to your will, that I am as faithful to you as Sávitri was to Satyaványt, Dyumat·sena's son? Were I to go with you, blameless Rághava, I would not even think of looking at any man but you, unlike some women who disgrace their family. But like a procurer, Rama, you are willing of your own accord to hand me over to others—your wife, who came to you a virgin and who has been a good woman all the long while she has lived with you. You must not leave for the forest without taking me. Let it be austerities, or the wilderness, or heaven, but let it be with you.

As I follow behind you I shall no more tire on the path 27.10
than on our pleasure beds. The *kusha* and *kasha* grass, the reeds, the rushes and thorn trees will feel just like cotton or a pelt to me on the road with you. The dust raised by heavy winds that will settle on me, my love, I shall look upon as the costliest sandalwood cream. As I roam through the deep forest there will be meadows for me to rest in, and to rest on

Śādvaleṣu yad āsiṣye van'ânte vana|goracā
kuth'|āstaraṇa|talpeṣu kiṃ syāt sukhataraṃ tataḥ.
Patraṃ mūlaṃ phalaṃ yat tvam alpaṃ vā yadi vā bahu
dāsyasi svayam āhṛtya tan me 'mṛta|ras'|ôpamam.
27.15 Na mātur na pitus tatra smariṣyāmi na veśmanaḥ
ārtavāny upabhuñjānā puṣpāṇi ca phalāni ca.
Na ca tatra gataḥ kiṃ cid draṣṭum arhasi vipriyam
mat|kṛte na ca te śoko na bhaviṣyāmi durbharā.

Yas tvayā saha sa svargo nirayo yas tvayā vinā
iti jānan parāṃ prītiṃ gaccha Rāma mayā saha.
Atha mām evam a|vyagrāṃ vanaṃ n' âiva nayiṣyasi
viṣam ady' âiva pāsyāmi mā viśaṃ dviṣatāṃ vaśam.
Paścād api hi duḥkhena mama n' âiv' âsti jīvitam
ujjhitāyās tvayā nātha tad" âiva maraṇaṃ varam.
27.20 Imaṃ hi sahituṃ śokaṃ muhūrtam api n' ôtsahe
kiṃ punar daśa|varṣāṇi trīṇi c'âikaṃ ca duḥkhitā.»

Iti sā śoka|saṃtaptā vilapya karuṇaṃ bahu
cukrośa patim āyastā bhṛśam āliṅgya sa|svaram.
Sā viddhā bahubhir vākyair digdhair iva gaj'|âṅganā
cira|saṃniyataṃ bāṣpaṃ mumoc' âgnim iv' âraṇiḥ.
Tasyāḥ sphaṭika|saṃkāśaṃ vāri saṃtāpa|saṃbhavam
netrābhyāṃ parisusrāva paṅkajābhyām iv' ôdakam.
Tāṃ pariṣvajya bāhubhyāṃ visaṃjñām iva duḥkhitām
uvāca vacanaṃ Rāmaḥ pariviśvāsayaṃs tadā:

couches spread with blankets could not give more pleasure. The leaves and roots and fruit you gather with your own hands and give me, however much or little there is, will taste like nectar to me. There will be fruits and flowers in 27.15 their seasons to enjoy, and I shall not think with longing of my mother or father or home. And when you are there you will not know any grief or displeasure on my account. I shall not be a burden.

To be with you is heaven, to be without you hell. Knowing how deep my love is, Rama, you must take me when you go. But if you will not let me go to the forest when I am so set on it, I will take poison this very day, sooner than come under the sway of those who hate us. Afterward I could not live anyway, my lord, for the sorrow of being deserted by you. Better to die that very instant. I could not 27.20 bear the grief of it even for a moment, much less ten years of sorrow, and three, and one."

Consumed with grief, she lamented long and piteously. Crying out in anguish, she shrieked and embraced her husband with all her might. His many words had wounded her, the way poison arrows wound a cow elephant. And the tears she had held in so long burst forth like a flame from a kindling stick. Water clear as crystal, springing from her torment, came gushing from all around her eyes, like water from two lotuses. She was nearly insensible with sorrow when Rama took her in his arms and comforted her with these words:

«Na devi tava duḥkhena svargam apy abhirocaye
na hi me 'sti bhayaṃ kiṃ cit Svayambhor iva sarvataḥ.
Tava sarvam abhiprāyam avijñāya śubh'|ānane
vāsaṃ na rocaye 'raṇye śaktimān api rakṣaṇe.
Yat sṛṣṭāsi mayā sārdhaṃ vana|vāsāya Maithili
na vihātuṃ mayā śakyā kīrtir ātmavatā yathā.
Dharmas tu gaja|nās"|ôru sadbhir ācaritaḥ purā
taṃ c' âham anuvarte 'dya yathā sūryaṃ Suvarcalā.
Eṣa dharmas tu suśroṇi: pitur mātuś ca vaśyatā
ataś c' ājñāṃ vyatikramya n' âhaṃ jīvitum utsahe.
Sa māṃ pitā yathā śāsti satya|dharma|pathe sthitaḥ
tathā vartitum icchāmi sa hi dharmaḥ sanātanaḥ
anugacchasva māṃ bhīru saha|dharma|carī bhava.
Brāhmaṇebhyaś ca ratnāni bhikṣukebhyaś ca bhojanam
dehi c' āśaṃsamānebhyaḥ saṃtvarasva ca mā ciram.»

Anukūlaṃ tu sā bhartur jñātvā gamanam ātmanaḥ
kṣipraṃ pramuditā devī dātum ev' ôpacakrame.
Tataḥ prahṛṣṭā paripūrṇa|mānasā
yaśasvinī bhartur avekṣya bhāṣitam
dhanāni ratnāni ca dātum aṅganā
pracakrame dharma|bhṛtāṃ manasvinī.

"If its price were your sorrow, my lady, I would refuse 27.25
heaven itself. No, I am not afraid of anything, any more than is the Self-existent Brahma. But without knowing your true feelings, my lovely, I could not consent to your living in the wilderness, though I am perfectly capable of protecting you. Since you are determined to live with me in the forest, Máithili, I could no sooner abandon you than a self-respecting man his reputation. But it is righteousness, my smooth-limbed wife, the righteousness good men in the past have practiced, that I am set on following today, as its radiance follows the sun. And righteousness is this, my fair-hipped wife: submission to one's mother and father. I could not bear to live were I to disobey their command. My father 27.30
keeps to the path of righteousness and truth, and I wish to act just as he instructs me. That is the eternal way of righteousness. Follow me, my timid one, be my companion in righteousness. Go now and bestow precious objects on the *brahman*s, give food to the mendicants and all who ask for it. Hurry, there is no time to waste."

Finding that her husband had acquiesced in her going, the lady was elated and set out at once to make the donations. Glorious Sita was delighted, her every wish fulfilled by what her husband said, and in high spirits the woman set off to give money and precious objects to all who upheld righteousness.

28.1 TATO 'BRAVĪN MAHĀ|TEJĀ Rāmo Lakṣmaṇam agrataḥ
sthitaṃ prāg|gāminaṃ vīraṃ yācamānaṃ kṛt'|âñjalim.
«May" âdya saha Saumitre tvayi gacchati tad vanam
ko bhariṣyati Kausalyāṃ Sumitrāṃ vā yaśasvinīm?
Abhivarṣati kāmair yaḥ parjanyaḥ pṛthivīm iva
sa kāma|pāśa|paryasto mahā|tejā mahī|patiḥ.
Sā hi rājyam idaṃ prāpya nṛpasy' Âśvapateḥ sutā
duḥkhitānāṃ sapatnīnāṃ na kariṣyati śobhanam.»
28.5 Evam uktas tu Rāmeṇa Lakṣmaṇaḥ ślakṣṇayā girā
pratyuvāca tadā Rāmaṃ vākyajño vākya|kovidam:
«Tav' îva tejasā vīra Bharataḥ pūjayiṣyati
Kausalyāṃ ca Sumitrāṃ ca prayato n' âtra saṃśayaḥ.
Kausalyā bibhṛyād āryā sahasram api mad|vidhān
yasyāḥ sahasraṃ grāmāṇāṃ saṃprāptam upajīvanam.
Dhanur ādāya sa|śaraṃ khanitra|piṭakā|dharaḥ
agratas te gamiṣyāmi panthānam anudarśayan.
Āhariṣyāmi te nityaṃ mūlāni ca phalāni ca
vanyāni yāni c' ânyāni svāhārāṇi tapasvinām.
28.10 Bhavāṃs tu saha Vaidehyā giri|sānuṣu raṃsyate
ahaṃ sarvaṃ kariṣyāmi jāgrataḥ svapataś ca te.»
Rāmas tv anena vākyena suprītaḥ pratyuvāca tam:
«vraj' āpṛcchasva Saumitre sarvam eva suhṛj|janam
Ye ca rājño dadau divye mah"|ātmā varuṇaḥ svayam
Janakasya mahā|yajñe dhanuṣī raudra|darśane.
Abhedya|kavace divye tūṇī c' âkṣaya|sāyakau
āditya|vimalau c' ôbhau khaḍgau hema|pariṣkṛtau.

MIGHTY RAMA THEN turned to Lákshmana, who came 28.1
and stood before him, hands cupped in reverence, begging that he might be allowed to go, in the very lead. "Saumítri, were you to go with me now to the forest, who would support Kausálya and glorious Sumítra? The mighty lord of the land, who used to shower them with all they desired, as a rain cloud showers the earth, is now caught up in the snare of desire. And once the daughter of King Ashva·pati gains control of the kingdom, she will not show any good will to her co-wives in their sorrow."

So Rama eloquently spoke, and Lákshmana in a gen- 28.5
tle voice replied to him with equal eloquence: "Your own power, my mighty brother, will no doubt ensure that Bhárata scrupulously honors Kausálya and Sumítra. The noble Kausálya could support a thousand men like me, for she has acquired a thousand villages as her living. I will take my bow and arrows and bear the spade and basket. I will go in front of you, leading the way. I will always be there to bring you roots and fruit and such other produce of the forest as is proper fare for ascetics. You shall take your pleasure with 28.10
Vaidéhi on the mountain slopes while I do everything for you, when you are awake and when you sleep."

His words pleased Rama, and he replied, "Go, Saumítri, and take leave of all your friends. And those two divine, awesome-looking bows that great Váruna himself bestowed on Jánaka at the grand sacrifice; the two suits of divine, impenetrable armor; the two quivers with inexhaustible arrows and the two swords bright as the sun and plated with gold—all was deposited in perfect order in our preceptor's

Sat|kṛtya nihitaṃ sarvam etad ācārya|sadmani.
sa tvam āyudham ādāya kṣipram āvraja Lakṣmaṇa.»
28.15 Sa suhṛj|janam āmantrya vana|vāsāya niścitaḥ
Ikṣvāku|gurum āmantrya jagrāh' āyudham uttamam.
Tad divyaṃ raghu|śārdūlaḥ sat|kṛtaṃ mālya|bhūṣitam
Rāmāya darśayām āsa Saumitriḥ sarvam āyudham.
Tam uvāc' ātmavān Rāmaḥ prītyā Lakṣmaṇam āgatam:
«kāle tvam āgataḥ saumya kāṅkṣite mama Lakṣmaṇa.
Ahaṃ pradātum icchāmi yad idaṃ māmakaṃ dhanam
brāhmaṇebhyas tapasvibhyas tvayā saha paraṃ|tapa.
Vasantīha dṛḍhaṃ bhaktyā guruṣu dvija|sattamāḥ
teṣām api ca me bhūyaḥ sarveṣāṃ c' ôpajīvinām.
28.20 Vasiṣṭha|putraṃ tu Suyajñam āryaṃ
tvam ānay' āśu pravaraṃ dvijānām
abhiprayāsyāmi vanaṃ samastān
abhyarcya śiṣṭān aparān dvijātīn.»

residence. Collect the arms, Lákshmana, and come back at once."

So, resolved to live in the forest, he bade farewell to his 28.15
friends and to the *guru* of the Ikshvákus, and gathered up the all-powerful arms. Saumítri, tiger of the Raghus, displayed to Rama all the divine arms, in perfect order still and adorned with garlands. When Lákshmana had come back, Rama, joyfully and with full self-possession, said to him, "You have come, dear Lákshmana, at the very moment I desired. I want your help, slayer of enemies, in giving away whatever wealth I possess to the poor *brahman*s, to the best of the twice-born who live here in firm devotion to my *guru*s, and in particular to all my dependents. Fetch at once 28.20
the foremost of the twice-born, noble Suyájña, Vasíshtha's son. I will leave for the forest after paying homage to him and all the other twice-born men of learning."

29–36
RAMA RENOUNCES

29.1 Tataḥ śāsanam ājñāya bhrātuḥ śubhataraṃ priyam
gatvā sa praviveś' āśu suyajñasya niveśanam.
Taṃ vipram agny'|āgarasthaṃ vanditvā Lakṣmaṇo 'bravīt:
«sakhe 'bhyāgaccha paśya tvaṃ veśma duṣkara|kāriṇaḥ.»
Tataḥ saṃdhyām upāsy' āśu gatvā Saumitriṇā saha
juṣṭaṃ tat prāviśal lakṣmyā ramyaṃ Rāma|niveśanam.
Tam āgataṃ veda|vidaṃ prāñjaliḥ Sītayā saha
Suyajñam abhicakrāma Rāghavo 'gnim iv' ârcitam.
29.5 Jāta|rūpa|mayair mukhyair aṅgadaiḥ kuṇḍalaiḥ śubhaiḥ
sa|hema sūtrair maṇibhiḥ keyūrair valayair api.
Anyaiś ca ratnair bahubhiḥ Kākutsthaḥ pratyapūjayat
Suyajñaṃ sa tad" ôvāca Rāmaḥ Sītā|pracoditaḥ:
«Hāraṃ ca hema|sūtraṃ ca bhāryāyai saumya hāraya
raśanāṃ c' âdhunā Sītā dātum icchati te sakhe.
Paryaṅkam agry'|āstaraṇaṃ nānā|ratna|vibhūṣitam
tam apīcchati Vaidehī pratiṣṭhāpayituṃ tvayi.
Nāgaḥ Śatruṃjayo nāma mātulo yaṃ dadau mama
taṃ te gaja|sahasreṇa dadāmi dvija|puṃgava.»
29.10 Ity uktaḥ sa hi Rāmeṇa Suyajñaḥ pratigṛhya tat
Rāma|Lakṣmaṇa|Sītānāṃ prayuyoj' āśiṣaḥ śivāḥ.
Atha bhrātaram a|vyagraṃ priyaṃ Rāmaḥ priyaṃ|vadaḥ
Saumitriṃ tam uvāc' êdaṃ brahm" êva tridaś'|ēśvaram:
«Āgastyaṃ Kauśikaṃ c' âiva tāv ubhau brāhmaṇ'|ôttamau
arcay' āhūya Saumitre ratnaiḥ sasyam iv' âmbubhiḥ.
Kausalyāṃ ca ya āśīrbhir bhaktaḥ paryupatiṣṭhati

Acknowledging his brother's most just and welcome order, he left and immediately entered Suyájña's house. The priest was in the fire-sanctuary, and after greeting him Lákshmana said, "My friend, come visit the dwelling of the man who is doing what no man has ever done." After performing the twilight worship he left straightaway with Saumítri and entered Rama's lovely, majestic house. 29.1

On the arrival of Suyájña, the master of the Vedas who shone like a fire ablaze with the offering, Rághava and Sita cupped their hands in reverence and approached him. Kakútstha honored Suyájña with gifts—magnificent armbands fashioned of gold, sparkling earrings, gems strung on golden chains, bracelets and wristbands, and many other precious objects. And then, at Sita's urging, Rama said to him: "Take this necklace and golden chain to your wife, my dear friend. Here is a jewelled belt, too, which Sita wishes to give you. She also wishes to bestow on you this couch with exquisite coverlets, adorned with a variety of gems. I have an elephant named Shatruñ·jaya, given to me by my maternal uncle and worth a thousand others. I make you a gift of him, bull among the twice-born." 29.5

So Rama spoke, and Suyájña accepted all the gifts and conferred gracious blessings on Rama, Lákshmana and Sita. As Brahma might address Indra, lord of the thirty gods, Rama then addressed his kind, attentive brother Saumítri with these kind words: "Summon the two eminent *brahman*s Agástya and Káushika and in homage shower precious objects on them, Saumítri, as crops are showered with rain. As for the learned preceptor of the Taittiríyas, the master of the Vedas who devotedly serves Kausálya with 29.10

ācāryas Taittirīyāṇām abhirūpaś ca vedavit.
Tasya yānaṃ ca dāsīś ca Saumitre saṃpradāpaya
kauśeyāni ca vastrāṇi yāvat tuṣyati sa dvijaḥ.
29.15 Sūtaś Citrarathaś c' āryaḥ sacivaḥ sucir'|ôṣitaḥ
toṣay' âinaṃ mah"ârhaiś ca ratnair vastrair dhanais tathā.
Śālivāha|sahasraṃ ca dve śate bhadrakāṃs tathā
vyañjan'|ârthaṃ ca Saumitre go|sahasram upākuru.»

Tataḥ sa puruṣa|vyāghras tad dhanaṃ Lakṣmaṇaḥ svayam
yath"|ôktaṃ brāhmaṇ'|êndrāṇām adadād dhanado yathā.
Ath' âbravīd bāṣpa|kalāṃs tiṣṭhataś c' ôpajīvinaḥ
saṃpradāya bahu|dravyam ek'|îkasy' ôpajīvinaḥ.
«Lakṣmaṇasya ca yad veśma gṛhaṃ ca yad idaṃ mama
a|śūnyaṃ kāryam ek'|âikaṃ yāvad āgamanaṃ mama.»
29.20 Ity uktvā duḥkhitaṃ sarvaṃ janaṃ tam upajīvinam
uvāc' êdaṃ dhan'|âdhyakṣaṃ: «dhanam ānīyatām iti»
tato 'sya dhanam ājahruḥ sarvam ev' ôpajīvinaḥ.
Tataḥ sa puruṣa|vyāghras tad dhanaṃ saha|Lakṣmaṇaḥ
dvijebhyo bāla|vṛddhebhyaḥ kṛpaṇebhyo 'bhyadāpayat.

Tatr' āsīt Piṅgalo Gārgyas Trijaṭo nāma vai dvijaḥ
ā pañcamāyāḥ kakṣyāyā n' âinaṃ kaś cid avārayat.
Sa rāja|putram āsādya Trijaṭo vākyam abravīt:
«nirdhano bahu|putro 'smi rāja|putra mahā|yaśaḥ.
uñcha|vṛttir vane nityaṃ pratyavekṣasva mām iti»
Tam uvāca tato Rāmaḥ parihāsa|samanvitam:
«gavāṃ sahasram apy ekaṃ na tu viśrāṇitaṃ mayā
parikṣipasi daṇḍena yāvat tāvad avāpsyasi.»
29.25 Sa śāṭīṃ tvaritaḥ kaṭyāṃ saṃbhrāntaḥ pariveṣṭya tām

his blessings—present that twice-born with a palanquin and slave girls, Saumítri, and silken garments to his heart's content. And give precious objects, garments and money 29.15
enough to content Chitra·ratha, the noble adviser and charioteer, who has lived with us so long. Present a thousand draft animals, two hundred oxen and a thousand cows, Saumítri, to provide for dairy needs."

Then Lákshmana himself, tiger among men, gave the riches as ordered to the lordly *brahman*s, just as Kubéra, giver of riches, might have done. Now, after Rama had bestowed great wealth on each and every one of his dependents, he spoke to them as they stood before him choked with tears. "Both Lákshmana's dwelling and the house belonging to me may be occupied until I return." After speak- 29.20
ing with all his sorrowful dependents, he turned to the keeper of the treasury and said, "Have the treasure brought." His dependents then fetched all his treasure. And the tiger among men, with Lákshmana's help, had the treasure distributed to the needy *brahman*s, young and old alike.

There came a sallow *brahman* then, by the name of Tri·jata Gargya, all the way up to the fifth courtyard without anyone stopping him. Reaching the prince, Tri·jata said, "Glorious prince, I am penniless and have many children. I must live by constant gleaning in the forest. Have regard for me." Rama replied to him jokingly, "There are one thousand cows I have not yet allocated. You shall have as many as you can cover by hurling your staff." In a frantic rush he 29.25
girded up the rag around his loins and, brandishing his staff impetuously, hurled it with every ounce of his strength. Rama then said to Gargya, seeking to placate him, "You

āvidhya daṇḍaṃ cikṣepa sarva|prāṇena vegitaḥ.
Uvāca ca tato Rāmas taṃ Gārgyam abhisāntvayan:
«manyur na khalu kartavyaḥ parihāso hy ayaṃ mama.»
Tataḥ sa|bhāryas Trijaṭo mahā|munir
gavām anīkaṃ pratigṛhya moditaḥ
yaśo|bala|prīti|sukh'|ôpabṛṃhiṇīs
tad āśiṣaḥ pratyavadan mah"|ātmanaḥ.

30.1 Dattvā tu saha Vaidehyā
brāhmaṇebhyo dhanaṃ bahu
jagmatuḥ pitaraṃ draṣṭuṃ
Sītayā saha Rāghavau.
Tato gṛhīte duṣprekṣye aśobhetāṃ tad" āyudhe
mālā|dāmabhir āsakte Sītayā samalaṃkṛte.
Tataḥ prāsāda|harmyāṇi vimāna|śikharāṇi ca
adhiruhya janaḥ śrīmān udāsīno vyalokayat.
Na hi rathyāḥ sma śakyante gantuṃ bahu|jan'|ākulāḥ
āruhya tasmāt prāsādān dīnāḥ paśyanti Rāghavam.
30.5 Padātiṃ varjita|cchatraṃ Rāmaṃ dṛṣṭvā tadā janāḥ
ūcur bahu|vidhā vācaḥ śok'|ôpahata|cetasaḥ:
«Yaṃ yāntam anuyāti sma catur|aṅga|balaṃ mahat
tam ekaṃ Sītayā sārdham anuyāti sma Lakṣmaṇaḥ.»
«Aiśvaryasya rasajñaḥ san kāmināṃ c' âiva kāmadaḥ
n' êcchaty ev' ânṛtaṃ kartuṃ pitaraṃ dharma|gauravāt.»
«Yā na śakyā purā draṣṭuṃ bhūtair ākāśagair api
tām adya Sītāṃ paśyanti rāja|mārga|gatā janāḥ.»
«Aṅga|rāg'|ôcitāṃ Sītāṃ rakta|candana|sevinīm
varṣam uṣṇaṃ ca śītaṃ ca n'êṣyaty āśu vivarṇatām.»
30.10 «Adya nūnaṃ Daśarathaṃ sattvam āviśya bhāṣate
na hi rājā priyaṃ putraṃ vivāsayitum arhati.»

must not be angry, truly. This was only a joke on my part." Then the great sage Tri·jata along with his wife accepted the herd of cows and pronounced blessings on the great prince conducive to fame, strength, joy and happiness.

Now, after the two Rághavas and Vaidéhi had bestowed vast wealth upon the *brahman*s, they went to see their father. How brilliant they looked when they took up their formidable weapons, which Sita had ornamented and hung with flower garlands. The wealthy townspeople went up to the roofs of their palaces and mansions and to the tops of many-storied buildings and watched despondently. The streets were so thronged with people as to be impassable, and so they went up to the roofs of their palaces and in desolation gazed down at Rághava. When the people saw Rama going on foot and without the royal parasol, their hearts were crushed with grief, and they said many different things: 30.1 29.5

"The prince, whom a vast army of four divisions used to follow as he went forth, is all alone now, with only Lákshmana and Sita to follow behind." "Though he has known the taste of kingly power and has always met the needs of the needy, in his veneration for righteousness he refuses to let his father break his word." "People on the royal highway can now look at Sita, a woman whom even creatures of the sky have never had a glimpse of before." "Sita is used to cosmetics and partial to red sandalwood cream, but the rain and the heat and the cold will soon ruin her complexion." "Surely it is some spirit that has possessed Dasha·ratha and 30.10

«Nirguṇasy' âpi putrasya kathaṃ syād vipra|vāsanam
kiṃ punar yasya loko 'yaṃ jito vṛttena kevalam?»
«Ānṛśaṃsyam anukrośaḥ śrutaṃ śīlaṃ damaḥ śamaḥ
Rāghavaṃ śobhayanty ete ṣaḍ|guṇāḥ puruṣ'|ôttamam.»

«Tasmāt tasy'ôpaghātena prajāḥ parama|pīḍitāḥ
audakānīva sattvāni grīṣme salila|saṃkṣayāt.»
«Pīḍayā pīḍitaṃ sarvaṃ jagad asya jagat|pateḥ
mūlasy' êv' ôpaghātena vṛkṣaḥ puṣpa|phal'|ôpagaḥ.»
30.15 «Te Lakṣmaṇa iva kṣipraṃ sapatnyaḥ saha|bāndhavāḥ
gacchantam anugacchāmo yena gacchati Rāghavaḥ.»
«Udyānāni parityajya kṣetrāṇi ca gṛhāṇi ca
eka|duḥkha|sukhā Rāmam anugacchāma dhārmikam.»
«Samuddhṛta|nidhānāni paridhvast'|âjirāṇi ca
upātta|dhana|dhānyāni hṛta|sārāṇi sarvaśaḥ.»
Rajas" âbhyavakīrṇāni parityaktāni daivataiḥ
asmat|tyaktāni veśmāni Kaikeyī pratipadyatām.»
«Vanaṃ nagaram ev' âstu yena gacchati Rāghavaḥ
asmābhiś ca parityaktaṃ puraṃ saṃpadyatāṃ vanam.»
30.20 «Bilāni daṃṣṭriṇaḥ sarve sānūni mṛga|pakṣiṇaḥ
asmat|tyaktaṃ prapadyantāṃ sevyamānaṃ tyajantu ca.»

Ity evaṃ vividhā vāco nānā|jana|samīritāḥ
śuśrāva Rāmaḥ śrutvā ca na vicakre 'sya mānasaṃ.
Pratīkṣamāṇo 'pijanaṃ tad|ārtam
an|ārta|rūpaḥ prahasann iv' âtha

spoken today, for the king could never bring himself to exile his beloved son." "How could a man force his own son into exile, even an unvirtuous son, let alone one who has vanquished the world simply by his good conduct?" "Benevolence, compassion, learning, good character, restraint and equanimity—these are the six virtues that adorn Rághava, the best of men."

"And so the people are sorely hurt by any injury to him, like water creatures when the water dries up in the summertime." "When the lord of the world is hurt so is all the world, as the fruit and flowers of a tree are hurt by an injury to its root." "Let us at once take our wives and kinsmen, and like Lákshmana follow Rághava as he goes forth, wherever he may go." "Let us abandon our gardens, our fields and homes, and follow righteous Rama, to share his sorrow and joy." "Let us unearth our buried treasure, remove our stores of grain and our wealth, and take all our valuables. And when the household gods have abandoned them, and their courtyards are falling into disrepair and the dust settling thick upon them, let Kaikéyi take possession of the dwellings we have left." "Let the wilderness where Rághava goes become our city, and the city we abandon turn into a wilderness." "Let all the animals leave their haunts, the snakes their lairs, the birds and beasts their mountain slopes, and take possession of what we have left."

Such were the kinds of remarks people were making one after the other, and Rama heard them, but for all that he heard his mind remained unmoved. And even when Rama looked at the people in their anguish, not the least anguish

jagāma Rāmaḥ pitaraṃ didṛkṣuḥ
pitur nideśaṃ vidhivac cikīrṣuḥ.
Tat pūrvam Aikṣvāka|suto mah”|ātmā
Rāmo gamiṣyan vanam ārta|rūpam
vyatiṣṭhata prekṣya tadā Sumantraṃ
pitur mah”|ātmā pratihāraṇ’|ârtham.
Pitur nideśena tu dharma|vatsalo
vana|praveśe kṛta|buddhi|niścayaḥ
sa Rāghavaḥ prekṣya Sumantram abravīn:
«nivedayasv’ āgamanaṃ nṛpāya me.»

31.1 Sa Rāma|preṣitaḥ kṣipraṃ saṃtāpa|kaluṣ’|êndriyaḥ
praviśya nṛ|patiṃ sūto niḥśvasantaṃ dadarśa ha.
Ālokya tu mahā|prājñaḥ param’|ākula|cetasaṃ
Rāmam ev’ ânuśocantaṃ sūtaḥ prāñjalir āsadat.
«Ayaṃ sa puruṣa|vyāghra dvāri tiṣṭhati te sutaḥ
brāhmaṇebhyo dhanaṃ dattvā sarvaṃ c’ âiv’ ôpajīvinām.
Sa tvā paśyatu bhadraṃ te Rāmaḥ satya|parākramaḥ
sarvān suhṛda āpṛcchya tvām idānīṃ didṛkṣate.
31.5 Gamiṣyati mah”|âraṇyaṃ taṃ paśya jagatī|pate
vṛtaṃ rāja|guṇaiḥ sarvair ādityam iva raśmibhiḥ.»
Sa satya|vādī dharm’|ātmā gāmbhīryāt sāgar’|ôpamaḥ
ākāśa iva niṣpaṅko nar’|êndraḥ pratyuvāca tam:
«Sumantr’ ānaya me dārān ye ke cid iha māmakāḥ
dāraiḥ parivṛtaḥ sarvair draṣṭum icchāmi Rāghavam.»
So ’ntaḥ|puram atīty’ âiva striyas tā vākyam abravīt:
«āryo hvayati vo rājā gamyatāṃ tatra mā ciram.»

touched him—he was smiling instead as he walked on, eager to see his father, eager to carry out his father's order to the letter. Rama, the great son of Aikshváka, on the point of leaving for the forest, caught sight of the anguished Sumántra, and only then did he come to a halt, in order to gain admittance to his father. Because he so cherished righteousness, Rághava had his mind firmly made up to enter the forest on his father's order. With a glance at Sumántra, he said, "Announce my arrival to the king."

30.1 When Rama dispatched him, the charioteer, his senses numb with misery, entered at once. He saw the lord of men heaving sighs. The wise charioteer gazed at him grieving over Rama in deep mental turmoil. He then approached with hands cupped in reverence. "Tiger among men, your son is here waiting at the door. He has given away all his wealth to *brahman*s and his dependents. Let Rama, who always strives for truth, come and see you, please. He has taken leave of all his friends and now wishes to see you. He 30.5 is about to depart for the great forest. Lord of the world, grant him audience, a man whom all kingly virtues encircle as beams encircle the sun."

The truthful and righteous lord of men, like the ocean in profundity and as free from taint as the sky, replied: "Sumántra, bring all my wives to me. I wish to see Rághava in the company of all my wives." He went straight into the inner chamber and said to the women, "The king your husband summons you. Go to him at once." So Sumántra spoke by order of the king, and all the women proceeded to their husband's chamber in compliance with his command.

Evam uktāḥ striyaḥ sarvāḥ Sumantreṇa nṛp'|âjñayā
pracakramus tad bhavanaṃ bhartur âjñāya śāsanam.
Ardha|sapta|śatās tās tu pramadās tāmra|locanāḥ
Kausalyāṃ parivāry' âtha śanair jagmur dhṛta|vratāḥ.
Āgateṣu ca dāreṣu samavekṣya mahī|patiḥ
uvāca rājā taṃ sūtaṃ: «Sumantr' ānaya me sutam.»
Sa sūto Rāmam ādāya Lakṣmaṇaṃ Maithilīṃ tadā
jagām' âbhimukhas tūrṇaṃ sakāśaṃ jagatī|pateḥ.

Sa rājā putram āyāntaṃ dṛṣṭvā dūrāt kṛt'|âñjalim
utpapāt' āsanāt tūrṇam ārtaḥ strī|jana|saṃvṛtaḥ.
So 'bhidudrāva vegena Rāmaṃ dṛṣṭvā viśāṃ patiḥ
tam asaṃprāpya duḥkh'|ārtaḥ papāta bhuvi mūrchitaḥ.
Taṃ Rāmo 'bhyapātat kṣipraṃ Lakṣmaṇaś ca mahā|rathaḥ
visaṃjñam iva duḥkhena sa|śokaṃ nṛ|patiṃ tadā.
Strī|sahasra|ninādaś ca saṃjajñe rāja|veśmani
«hā hā Rām' êti» sahasā bhūṣaṇa|dhvani|mūrchitaḥ.
Taṃ pariṣvajya bāhubhyāṃ tāv ubhau Rāma|Lakṣmaṇau
paryaṅke Sītayā sārdhaṃ rudantaḥ samaveśayan.

Atha Rāmo muhūrtena labdha|saṃjñaṃ mahī|patim
uvāca prāñjalir bhūtvā śok'|ârṇava|pariplutam:
«Āpṛcche tvāṃ mahā|rāja sarveṣām īśvaro 'si naḥ
prasthitaṃ Daṇḍak'|âraṇyaṃ paśya tvaṃ kuśalena mām.
Lakṣmaṇaṃ c' ânujānīhi Sītā c' ânveti māṃ vanam
kāraṇair bahubhis tathyair vāryamāṇau na c' êcchataḥ.
Anujānīhi sarvān naḥ śokam utsṛjya mānada
Lakṣmaṇaṃ māṃ ca Sītāṃ ca Prajāpatir iva prajāḥ.»

Half seven hundred ladies with coppery eyes, who held firm 31.10
to their vows, gathered around Kausálya and slowly made their way. When the king and lord of the land observed that his wives had come, he said to the charioteer, "Sumántra, now bring my son." Then, with Rama, Lákshmana, and Máithili, the charioteer at once came forward into the presence of the lord of the world.

Seeing his son at a distance approaching with hands cupped in reverence, the tormented king in the midst of his womenfolk started up suddenly from his throne. At the sight of Rama the lord of the peoples ran impetuously forward but, broken by sorrow, he fell to the ground in a faint before he reached him. Rama flew to him at once and so 31.15
did Lákshmana, the great chariot-fighter, as the lord of men lay insensible with sorrow and lost in grief. And suddenly a shrill screaming broke out in the king's chamber, as countless women cried, "Alas, alas for Rama!," the cry made all the louder by the noise of their jewelry. Rama and Lákshmana both took him in their arms and with Sita's help they laid him on a couch, all three of them in tears.

After a moment the lord of the land, overwhelmed by a sea of grief, regained consciousness. Then Rama cupped his hands in reverence and said to him: "I ask leave of you, your majesty, for you are lord of us all. I am about to set out for Dándaka wilderness. Look kindly on me. Give leave 31.20
to Lákshmana. Sita, too, shall follow me to the forest. Neither of them would be dissuaded despite the many sound arguments I offered. Have done with grieving, bestower of honor, and give leave to us all, to Lákshmana, Sita, and me, as Praja·pati once gave his children leave." Rághava waited

Pratīkṣamāṇam avyagram anujñāṃ jagatī|pateḥ
uvāca rarjā saṃprekṣya vana|vāsāya Rāghavam
«Ahaṃ Rāghava Kaikeyyā vara|dānena mohitaḥ
Ayodhyāyās tvam ev' âdya bhava rājā nigṛhya mām.»

Evam ukto nṛ|patinā Rāmo dharmabhṛtāṃ varaḥ
pratyuvāc' âñjaliṃ kṛtvā pitaraṃ vākya|kovidaḥ:
31.25 «Bhavān varṣa|sahasrāya pṛthivyā nṛ|pate patiḥ
ahaṃ tv araṇye vatsyāmi na me kāryaṃ tvay" ânṛtam.»
«Śreyase vṛddhaye tāta punar āgamanāya ca
gacchasv' âriṣṭam avyagraḥ panthānam a|kuto|bhayam.
Adya tv idānīṃ rajanīṃ putra mā gaccha sarvathā
mātaraṃ māṃ ca saṃpaśyan vas' êmām adya śarvarīm
tarpitaḥ sarva|kāmais tvaṃ śvaḥ|kāle sādhayiṣyasi.»

Atha Rāmas tathā śrutvā pitur ārtasya bhāṣitam
Lakṣmaṇena saha bhrātrā dīno vacanam abravīt:
«Prāpsyāmi yān adya guṇān ko me śvas tān pradāsyati?
apakramaṇam ev' âtaḥ sarva|kāmair ahaṃ vṛṇe.
31.30 Iyaṃ sa|rāṣṭrā sa|janā dhana|dhānya|samākulā
mayā visṛṣṭā vasudhā Bharatāya pradīyatām.
Apagacchatu te duḥkhaṃ mā bhūr bāṣpa|pariplutaḥ

intently for the lord of the world to grant him permission to live in the forest. The king looked at him and said, "Rágha-va, I was deceived by Kaikéyi into granting a boon. Depose me now and become king of Ayódhya yourself."

So the lord of men, his father, spoke, and Rama, champion of righteousness, cupped his hands in reverence and in full command of his words replied to him: "You shall be 31.25
lord of earth, your majesty, for countless years to come, and I will live in the wilderness. You must not on my account act untruthfully. After I have passed the nine years and five of life in the forest, I shall once again clasp your feet, lord of men, when the promise is fulfilled." The king wept in anguish at the snare of truth in which he was caught. But under silent pressure from Kaikéyi, he said at last to his beloved son: "Go in safety, my dear son, and may no harm befall you. May your way be safe and free from all dangers, and lead you to good fortune, prosperity and home once more. But by no means must you go now, this evening, my son. Spend the night in the company of your mother and me. Tomorrow morning, with all your desires satisfied, you may set out."

When Rama heard the words of his anguished father, he was desolate, and so was his brother Lákshmana. He said: "Who will confer on me tomorrow the benefits I should have tonight? I prefer, to any objects of desire, merely to depart. I abdicate all claim to this treasure-laden earth, its 31.30
kingdom and people, its stores of grain and wealth. Let it be made over to Bhárata. Put an end to your sorrow, do not let tears overwhelm you. The indomitable lord of rivers, the ocean, remains forever unperturbed. It is not kingship

na hi kṣubhyati durdharṣaḥ samudraḥ saritāṃ patiḥ.
N' âiv' âhaṃ rājyam icchāmi na sukhaṃ na ca Maithilīm
tvām ahaṃ satyam icchāmi n' ânṛtaṃ puruṣa|ṛṣabha.
Puraṃ ca rāṣṭraṃ ca mahī ca kevalā
mayā nisṛṣṭā Bharatāya dīyatām
ahaṃ nideśaṃ bhavato 'nupālayan
vanaṃ gamiṣyāmi cirāya sevitum.
Mayā nisṛṣṭāṃ Bharato mahīm imāṃ
sa|śaila|khaṇḍāṃ sa|purāṃ sa|kānanām
śivāṃ susīmām anuśāstu kevalaṃ
tvayā yad uktaṃ nṛ|pate yath" âstu tat.
31.35 Na me tathā pārthiva dhīyate mano
mahatsu kāmeṣu na c' ātmanaḥ priye
yathā nideśe tava śiṣṭa|saṃmate
vyapaitu duḥkhaṃ tava mat|kṛte 'nagha.
Tad adya n' âiv' ânagha rājyam avyayaṃ
na sarva|kāmān na sukhaṃ na Maithilīm
na jīvitaṃ tvām anṛtena yojayan
vṛṇīya satyaṃ vratam astu te tathā.
Phalāni mūlāni ca bhakṣayan vane
girīṃś ca paśyan saritaḥ sarāṃsi ca
vanaṃ praviśy' âiva vicitrapādapaṃ
sukhī bhaviṣyāmi tav' âstu nirvṛtiḥ.»

32.1 Tataḥ Sumantram Aikṣvākaḥ pīḍito 'tra pratijñayā
sa|bāṣpam atiniḥśvasya jagād' êdaṃ punaḥ punaḥ.
«Sūta ratna|susaṃpūrṇā catur|vidha|balā camūḥ
Rāggavasy' ânuyātr"|ârthaṃ kṣipraṃ pratividhīyatām.
Rūp'|ājīvā ca śālinyo vaṇijaś ca mahā|dhanāḥ
śobhayantu kumārasya vāhinīṃ suprasāritāḥ.

or comfort or even Máithili that I desire, but that you be truthful, bull among men, not false. The city, the kingdom, and the entire land I abdicate. Let it all be given to Bhárata. I will follow your command and leave for my long stay in the forest.

Let Bhárata hold absolute rule over the land I abdicate—this kindly land with its firm boundaries, its mountain ranges, towns and woodlands. Let it be as you have said, my king. Never to the same degree have I set my heart on 31.35
great objects of desire or my own pleasure, your majesty, as on your command, which men of learning always endorse. Put an end to your sorrow on my account, my blameless father. If it meant entangling you in falsehood, my blameless father, I would reject sovereign kingship, reject all objects of desire, all comforts, Máithili, life itself. The truth of your vow must be preserved. There will be fruit and roots in the forest for me to eat, mountains, rivers and lakes to see, and the moment I find myself among the many-colored trees I shall be happy. You should feel joy as well."

Tormented by his promise, Aikshváka heaved a deep 32.1
and tearful sigh, and then in an urgent voice he said to Sumántra: "Charioteer, I want an army, a force of four divisions, to be provisioned with every luxury and marshalled at once as escort for Rághava. Let there be eminent courtesans to adorn the prince's retinue and prosperous merchants

Ye c' âinam upajīvanti ramate yaiś ca vīryataḥ
teṣāṃ bahu|vidhaṃ dattvā tān apy atra niyojaya.
32.5 Nighnan mṛgān kuñjarāṃś ca pibaṃś c' âraṇyakaṃ madhu
nadīś ca vividhāḥ paśyan na rājyaṃ saṃsmariṣyati.
Dhānya|kośaś ca yaḥ kaś cid dhana|kośaś ca māmakaḥ
tau Rāmam anugacchetāṃ vasantaṃ nirjane vane.
Yajan puṇyeṣu deśeṣu visṛjaṃś c' āpta|dakṣiṇāḥ
ṛṣibhiś ca samāgamya pravatsyati sukhaṃ vane.
Bharataś ca mahā|bāhur Ayodhyāṃ pālayiṣyati
sarva|kāmaiḥ punaḥ śrīmān Rāmaḥ saṃsādhyatām iti.»

Evaṃ bruvati Kākutsthe Kaikeyyā bhayam āgatam
mukhaṃ c' âpy agamāc cheṣaṃ svaraś c' âpi nyarudhyata.
32.10 Sā vivarṇā ca saṃtrastā Kaikeyī vākyam abravīt:
«rājyaṃ gata|dhanaṃ sādho pīta|maṇḍāṃ surām iva
nirāsvādyatamaṃ śūnyaṃ Bharato n' âbhipatsyate!»
Kaikeyyāṃ mukta|lajjāyāṃ vadantyām atidāruṇam
rājā Daśaratho vākyam uvāc' āyata|locanām:
«vahantaṃ kiṃ tudasi māṃ niyujya dhuri māhite?»
Kaikeyī dvi|guṇaṃ kruddhā rājānam idam abravīt:
«tav' âiva vaṃśe Sagaro jyeṣṭhaṃ putram upārudhat
Asamañja iti khyātaṃ tath" âyaṃ gantum arhati.»
Evam ukto «dhig ity» eva rājā Daśaratho 'bravīt:
vrīḍitaś ca janaḥ sarvaḥ sā ca tan n' âvabudhyata.

with choice wares to display. Handsomely pay all his dependents and all whose acts of strength have pleased him and assign them to his suite as well. Killing deer and elephants, 32.5
drinking forest liquor and viewing the different rivers he will not think with longing of the kingdom. The entire contents of my granary and treasury are to go with Rama while he lives in the desolate forest. His life in the forest will be pleasant, what with holding sacrifices at holy places, conferring fitting priestly stipends and consorting with seers. Great-armed Bhárata shall protect Ayódhya. Let majestic Rama be sent off with every object of desire."

While Kakútstha was speaking, Kaikéyi was gripped by fear. Her mouth went dry and her voice was choked. Pale 32.10
and frightened, Kaikéyi spoke out: "My good man, Bhárata is not to take charge of a kingdom stripped of its wealth, like a cup of wine drained to the dregs, an empty kingdom without a single thing to whet his appetite!" So Kaikéyi viciously spoke, abandoning all shame, and King Dasha·ratha answered his large-eyed wife: "Will you yoke me to a burden, malicious woman, and beat me even as I bear it?" Kaikéyi's fury was redoubled. "It was in your House," she said to the king, "that Ságara dispossessed his eldest son—Asamáñja was his name. This one must leave in the same way." "Curse you!" was all King Dasha·ratha could say in reply. And though the people were all ashamed for her, she paid them no mind.

Tatra vṛddho mahā|mātraḥ Siddh'|ârtho nāma nāmataḥ
śucir bahu|mato rājñaḥ Kaikeyīm idam abravīt:
32.15 «Asamañjo gṛhītvā tu krīḍitaḥ pathi dārakān
Sarayvāḥ prakṣipann apsu ramate tena durmatiḥ.
Taṃ dṛṣṭvā nāgaraḥ sarve kruddhā rājānam abruvan:
‹Asamañjaṃ vṛṣīṇv' âikam asmān vā rāṣṭra|vardhana.›
Tān uvāca tato rājā: ‹kiṃ|nimittam idaṃ bhayam›
tāś c' âpi rājñā saṃpṛṣṭā vākyaṃ prakṛtayo 'bruvan:
‹krīḍitas tv eṣa naḥ putrān bālān udbhrānta|cetanaḥ
Sarayvāṃ prakṣipan maurkhyād atulāṃ prītim aśnute.›
Sa tāsāṃ vacanaṃ śrutvā prakṛtīnāṃ nar'|âdhipa
taṃ tatyāj' âhitaṃ putraṃ tāsāṃ priya|cikīrṣayā.
32.20 Ity evam atyajad rājā Sagaro vai sudhārmikaḥ
Rāmaḥ kim akarot pāpaṃ yen' âivam uparudhyate?»
Śrutvā tu Siddhārtha|vaco rājā śrāntatara|svanaḥ
śok'|ôpahatayā vācā Kaikeyīm idam abravīt.
«Anuvrajiṣyāmy aham adya Rāmaṃ
rājyaṃ parityajya sukhaṃ dhanaṃ ca
sah' âiva rājñā Bharatena ca tvaṃ
yathā sukhaṃ bhuṅkṣva cirāya rājyam.»

33.1 Mahā|mātra|vacaḥ śrutvā Rāmo Daśarathaṃ tadā
anvabhāṣata vākyaṃ tu vinayajño vinītavat.
«Tyakta|bhogasya me rājan vane vanyena jīvataḥ
kiṃ kāryam anuyātreṇa tyakta|saṅgasya sarvataḥ?
Yo hi dattvā dvipa|śreṣṭhaṃ kakṣyāyāṃ kurute manaḥ
rajju|snehena kiṃ tasya tyajataḥ kuñjar'|ôttamam?
Tathā mama satāṃ śreṣṭha kiṃ dhvajinyā jagat|pate?

Then an aged minister named Siddhártha, an honest man esteemed by the king, addressed Kaikéyi: "But Asamáñja 32.15
was wicked. He took pleasure in seizing children playing on the road and then hurling them into the waters of the Sárayu. When the townsmen saw what he was doing they were all enraged and told the king, 'Increaser of the realm, you must choose one: either Asamáñja or us.' The king asked, 'What has happened to cause this fear of yours?,' and the citizens responded to the king's inquiry: 'When our little children are out playing, this madman hurls them into the Sárayu and enjoys it to no end in his insanity.' When he heard what the people said, the lord of men renounced his malevolent son in his desire to please them. It was thus 32.20
righteous King Ságara renounced him. But what evil has Rama done that he should be dispossessed like that?"

After listening to Siddhártha's speech, the king, in a failing voice and words fraught with grief, said to Kaikéyi: "I will accompany Rama today, renouncing altogether the kingdom, pleasure and wealth. And with King Bhárata may you long enjoy the kingdom to your heart's content."

After listening to the minister's speech, Rama ad- 33.1
dressed Dasha·ratha with the deference in which he was practiced. "I have given up pleasures, your majesty, and shall live in the wilderness on things of the wild. I have given up all attachments; what use then have I of an escort? Would a man who gives away a prize elephant cling to the cinch-belt? Why cherish the rope once the animal is gone? So it is for me, too, best of men and lord of the world. What use have I for a bannered army? I must refuse it all.

sarvāṇy ev' ânujānāmi cīrāṇy ev' ānayantu me.
Khanitra|piṭake c' ôbhe mam' ānayata gacchataḥ
catur|daśa vane vāsaṃ varṣāṇi vasato mama.»

Atha cīrāṇi Kaikeyī svayam āhṛtya Rāghavam
uvāca: «paridhatsv' êti» jan'|âughe nirapatrapā.
Sa cīre puruṣa|vyāghraḥ Kaikeyyāḥ pratigṛhya te
sūkṣma|vastram avakṣipya muni|vastrāṇy avasta ha.
Lakṣmaṇaś c' âpi tatr' âiva vihāya vasane śubhe
tāpas'|ācchādane c' âiva jagrāha pitur agrataḥ.

Ath' ātma|paridhān'|ârthaṃ Sītā kauśeya|vāsinī
samīkṣya cīraṃ saṃtrastā pṛṣatī vāgurām iva.
Sā vyapatrapamāṇ" êva pratigṛhya ca durmanāḥ
gandharva|rāja|pratimaṃ bhartāram idam abravīt:
«kathaṃ nu cīraṃ badhnanti munayo vana|vāsinaḥ?»
Kṛtvā kaṇṭhe ca sā cīram ekam ādāya pāṇinā
tasthau hy akuśalā tatra vrīḍitā Janak'|ātmajā.
Tasyās tat kṣipram āgamya Rāmo dharmabhṛtāṃ varaḥ
cīraṃ babandha Sītāyāḥ kauśeyasy' ôpari svayam.
Tasyāṃ cīraṃ vasānāyāṃ nāthavatyām a|nāthavat
pracukrośa janaḥ sarvo «dhik tvāṃ Daśarathaṃ tv iti.»
Sa niḥśvasy' ôṣṇam Aikṣvākas tāṃ bhāryām idam abravīt:
«Kaikeyi kuśa|cīreṇa na Sītā gantum arhati.
Nanu paryāptam etat te pāpe Rāma|vivāsanam.
kim ebhiḥ kṛpaṇair bhūyaḥ pātakair api te kṛtaiḥ?»

Let them bring me only bark-cloth garments. Bring me a small basket, too, and a spade before I go to the forest to make my dwelling for fourteen years." 33.5

Kaikéyi herself then brought the bark-cloth garments. "Put them on!" she said to Rághava, unembarrassed before the crowd of people. The tiger among men took a pair of them from Kaikéyi, and, laying his delicate clothes aside, he dressed himself in the clothes of a sage. Lákshmana too, then and there, removed his lovely clothing and put on the garb of an ascetic, in the presence of his father.

Then Sita, who was dressed in silks, glanced at the bark-cloth garment meant for her to wear, and she was frightened, like a spotted doe at the sight of a trap. Disconcerted and embarrassed, she took it up. Then she said to her husband, the very image of the king of *gandhárva*s, "How do the sages who live in the forest put on bark cloth?" She picked one up in her hand and held it to her neck and stood there, the daughter of Jánaka, awkward and ashamed. At once Rama, champion of righteousness, came up to her and with his own hands fastened it over Sita's silks. Dressed in bark cloth she stood there as if defenseless, though her defender was at her side, while the people all cried out, "A curse upon you, Dasha·ratha!" Aikshváka heaved a burning sigh as he said to his wife, "Kaikéyi, Sita must not go in garments of bark and *kusha* grass. Surely it suffices you, evil creature, that Rama is being exiled. Must you heap these vile crimes on top of that?" 33.10 33.15

Evaṃ bruvantaṃ pitaraṃ Rāmaḥ saṃprasthito vanam
avāk|śirasam āsīnam idaṃ vacanam abravīt:
«Iyaṃ dhārmika Kausalyā mama mātā yaśasvinī
vṛddhā c' â|kṣudra|śīlā ca na ca tvāṃ deva|garhite.
Mayā vihīnāṃ varada prapannāṃ śoka|sāgaram
a|dṛṣṭa|pūrva|vyasanāṃ bhūyaḥ saṃmantum arhasi.
Imāṃ mah"|êndr'|ôpama|jāta|garbhiṇīṃ
tathā vidhātuṃ jananīṃ mam' ârhasi
yathā vanasthe mayi śoka|karśitā
na jīvitaṃ nyasya yama|kṣayaṃ vrajet.»

34.1 Rāmasya tu vacaḥ śrutvā muni|veṣa|dharaṃ ca tam
samīkṣya saha bhāryābhī rājā vigata|cetanaḥ.
N' âinaṃ duḥkhena saṃtaptaḥ pratyavaikṣata Rāghavam
na c' âinam abhisaṃprekṣya pratyabhāṣata durmanāḥ.
Sa muhūrtam iv' âsaṃjño duḥkhitaś ca mahī|patiḥ
vilalāpa mahā|bāhū Rāmam ev' ânucintayan:
«Manye khalu mayā pūrvaṃ vivatsā bahavaḥ kṛtāḥ
prāṇino hiṃsitā v" âpi tasmād idam upasthitam.
34.5 Na tv ev' ânāgate kāle dehāc cyavati jīvitam
Kaikeyyā kliśyamānasya mṛtyur mama na vidyate.
Yo 'haṃ pāvaka|saṃkāśaṃ paśyāmi puataḥ sthitam
vihāya vasane sūkṣme tāpas'|ācchādam ātmajam.
Ekasyāḥ khalu Kaikeyyāḥ kṛte 'yaṃ kliśyate janaḥ
sv'|ârthe prayatamānāyāḥ saṃśritya nikṛtiṃ tv imām.»
Evam uktvā tu vacanaṃ bāṣpeṇa pihit'|ēkṣaṇaḥ
«Rām' êti» sakṛd ev' oktvā vyāhartuṃ na śaśāka ha.

With this, the king hung his head and sat still, and Rama addressed him once more before leaving for the forest: "Righteous father, Kausálya here, my glorious mother, is an aged woman of noble character, and she does not reproach you, my lord. She has never known adversity before, and bereft of me she will be plunged into a sea of grief. Show her higher regard, please, granter of boons. Equal of great Indra, this mother of mine dotes on her child. Please, take care that she not be tortured with grief when I am in the forest, that she does not lay down her life and go her way to the house of Yama, god of death."

Hearing Rama's words and seeing him dressed in the 34.1
clothes of a sage, the king, along with all his wives, was stricken senseless. He was so broken by sorrow he could not look at Rághava, so sick at heart he could not address him to his face. The great-armed lord of the land fell unconscious for a moment and then in sorrow he began to lament, thinking only of Rama: "It must be, I guess, that in the past I injured many living things or made many childless; that must be why such a thing has happened to me. Before one's 34.5
fated hour has come life cannot slip from the body, for Kaikéyi has tortured me and still I am not dead—I who see before me my own son, brilliant as fire, taking off his delicate garments and dressing in the clothes of an ascetic. The people, too, are tortured, and all because one woman, Kaikéyi, resorted to this deception in the pursuit of her own ends." So he spoke, his eyes dimmed by tears. Then he cried out "Rama!" only once, and could speak no further.

Saṃjñāṃ tu pratilabhy' âiva muhūrtāt sa mahī|patiḥ
netrābhyām aśru|pūrṇābhyāṃ Sumantram idam abravīt:
«Aupavāhyaṃ rathaṃ yuktvā tvam āyāhi hay'|ôttamaiḥ
prāpay' âinaṃ mahā|bhāgam ito jana|padāt param.
Evaṃ manye guṇavatāṃ guṇānāṃ phalam ucyate
pitrā mātrā ca yat sādhur vīro nirvāsyate vanam.»

Rājño vacanam ājñāya Sumantraḥ śīghra|vikramaḥ
yojayitv" āyayau tatra ratham aśvair alaṃkṛtam.
Taṃ rathaṃ rāja|putrāya sūtaḥ kanaka|bhūṣitam
ācacakṣe 'ñjaliṃ kṛtvā yuktaṃ parama|vājibhiḥ.
Rājā satvaram āhūya vyāpṛtaṃ vitta|saṃcaye
uvāca deśa|kālajñaṃ niścitaṃ sarvataḥ śucim.
«Vāsāṃsi ca mah"|ârhāṇi bhūṣaṇāni varāṇi ca
varṣāṇy etāni saṃkhyāya Vaidehyāḥ kṣipram ānaya.»
Nar'|êndreṇ' âivam uktas tu gatvā kośa|gṛhaṃ tataḥ
prāyacchat sarvam āhṛtya Sītāyai kṣipram eva tat.

Sā sujātā sujātāni Vaidehī prasthitā vanam
bhūṣayām āsa gātrāṇi tair vicitrair vibhūṣaṇaiḥ.
Vyarājayata Vaidehī veśma tat suvibhūṣitā
udyato 'ṃśumataḥ kāle khaṃ prabheva vivasvataḥ.
Tāṃ bhujābhyāṃ pariṣvajya śvaśrūr vacanam abravīt
anācarantīṃ kṛpaṇaṃ mūdhny upāghrāya Maithilīm:
«Asatyaḥ sarva|loke 'smin satataṃ sat|kṛtāḥ priyaiḥ
bhartāraṃ n' ânumanyante vinipāta|gataṃ striyaḥ.

When after a moment he regained his senses, the lord of the land, his eyes filled with tears, said to Sumántra: "Harness the finest horses to a draft-chariot and return; you must convey my illustrious son out of this country. Such, I guess, must be the reward the virtuous earn by their virtues, if this good and heroic prince is exiled to the forest by his mother and his father."

Acknowledging the king's command, Sumántra left at a quick pace. He harnessed the horses to the decorated chariot and then returned to the chamber. Cupping his hands in reverence, the charioteer informed the prince that the chariot was standing ready, ornamented with gold and harnessed with excellent horses. The king hurriedly summoned the officer in charge of the treasury. He was a meticulous and altogether honest man, with an accurate knowledge of times and places. "Go at once," he told him, "and fetch precious garments and choice ornaments for Vaidéhi, calculating against the number of years." Thus addressed by the lord of men, he went at once to the treasure-room and brought everything and presented it to Sita.

Noble Vaidéhi, on the point of leaving for the forest, adorned her noble limbs with the sparkling jewelry. And in her rich adornment, Vaidéhi shed a deep luster over the chamber—it was like daybreak when the radiant sun comes up and sheds its splendor over the sky. Her mother-in-law took Máithili in her arms and kissed her on the forehead, and then said to the virtuous princess: "If a woman who has been constantly gratified with things to please her does not hold her husband in respect when he has fallen low, she is regarded as a bad woman in the eyes of all the world. You

Sa tvayā n' âvamantavyaḥ putraḥ pravrājito mama
tava daivatam astv eṣa nirdhanaḥ sa|dhano 'pi vā.»

Vijñāya vacanaṃ Sītā tasyā dharm'|ârtha|saṃhitam
kṛt'|âñjalir uvāc' êdaṃ śvaśrūm abhimukhe sthitā:
«Kariṣye sarvam ev' âham āryā yad anuśāsti mām
abhijñāsmi yathā bhartur vartitavyaṃ śrutaṃ ca me.
Na mām asaj|janen' āryā samānayitum arhati
dharmād vicalituṃ n' âham alaṃ candrād iva prabhā.
N' âtantrī vādyate vīṇā n' âcakro vartate rathaḥ
n' āpatiḥ sukham edhate yā syād api śat'|ātmajā.
Mitaṃ dadāti hi pitā mitaṃ mātā mitaṃ sutaḥ
amitasya hi dātāraṃ bhartāraṃ kā na pūjayet?
S" âham evaṃ|gatā śreṣṭhā śruta|dharma|par" âvarā
ārye kim avamanyeyaṃ? strīṇāṃ bhartā hi daivatam.»

Sītāyā vacanaṃ śrutvā Kausalyā hṛdayaṃ|gamam
śuddha|sattvā mumoc' âśru sahasā duḥkha|harṣajam.
Tāṃ prāñjalir abhikramya mātṛ|madhye 'tisatkṛtām
Rāmaḥ parama|dharmajño mātaraṃ vākyam abravīt:
«Amba mā duḥkhitā bhūs tvaṃ
paśya tvaṃ pitaraṃ mama
kṣayo hi vana|vāsasya
kṣipram eva bhaviṣyati.
Suptāyās te gamiṣyanti nava|varṣāṇi pañca ca

must not feel disdain for my son in his banishment. He is your deity, whether he be rich or poor."

Sita knew her words were in harmony with what was right and good and, with hands cupped in reverence, she faced her mother-in-law and replied: "I will act exactly as my noble lady instructs me. I fully understand how to behave toward my husband; I have learned well. My lady ought not to liken me to bad people. I could no more leave the path of righteousness than radiance can leave the moon. Without strings a lute cannot be played, without wheels a 34.25
chariot cannot move, and without her husband a woman finds no happiness, though she have a hundred sons. There is a limit to what a father can give, a limit to what a mother or son can give, but a husband gives without any limit. What wife would not revere him? I for my part understand this; I am a high-born woman who has learned right from wrong. My lady, how could I be disdainful? A husband is a woman's deity."

As Kausálya listened to Sita, the words touched the good woman's heart, and she suddenly burst out in tears of joy and sorrow. Then Rama, who understood best of all the meaning of righteousness, cupped his hands in reverence and approached his mother where she stood in the place of honor among the others. And he said to her:

"Do not be sorrowful, mother. Have regard for my father. 34.30
My stay in the forest will soon be over. The nine years and five will pass for you like a night's sleep, and you will see me come home safe and sound, in the company of my loved ones." These few sensible words were all he said to the woman who bore him. Then he turned his gaze and

sā samagram iha prāptaṃ māṃ drakṣyasi suhṛd|vṛtam.»
Etāvad abhinīt'|ârtham uktvā sa jananīṃ vacaḥ
trayaḥ śata|śat'|ârdhā hi dadarś' âvekṣya mātaraḥ.
Tāś c' âpi sa tath" âiv' ārtā mātṝr Daśarath'|ātmajaḥ
dharma|yuktam idaṃ vākyaṃ nijagāda kṛt'|âñjaliḥ:
«Saṃvāsāt paruṣaṃ kiṃ cid ajñānād v" âpi yat kṛtam
tan me samanujānīta sarvāś c' āmantrayāmi vaḥ.»
34.35 Jajñe 'tha tāsāṃ saṃnādaḥ krauñcīnām iva niḥsvanaḥ
mānav'|êndrasya bhāryāṇām evaṃ vadati Rāghave.
Muraja|paṇava|megha|ghoṣavad
Daśaratha|veśma babhūva yat purā
vilapita paridevan"|ākulaṃ
vyasana|gataṃ tad abhūt suduḥkhitam.

35.1 Atha Rāmaś ca Sītā ca Lakṣmaṇaś ca kṛt'|âñjaliḥ
upasaṃgṛhya rājānaṃ cakrur dīnāḥ pradakṣiṇam
Taṃ c' âpi samanujñāpya dharmajñaḥ Sītayā saha
Rāghavaḥ śoka|saṃmūḍho jananīm abhyavādayat
Anvakṣaṃ Lakṣmaṇo bhrātuḥ Kausalyām abhyavādayat
atha mātuḥ Sumitrāyā jagrāha caraṇau punaḥ.
Taṃ vandamānaṃ rudatī mātā Saumitrim abravīt
hita|kāmā mahā|bāhuṃ mūrdhny upāghrāya Lakṣmaṇam.
35.5 «Sṛṣṭas tvaṃ vana|vāsāya svanuraktaḥ suhṛj|jane
Rāme pramādaṃ mā kārṣīḥ putra bhrātari gacchati.
Vyasanī vā samṛddho vā gatir eṣa tav' ânagha
eṣa loke satāṃ dharmo yaj jyeṣṭha|vaśago bhavet:
Idaṃ hi vṛttam ucitaṃ kulasy' âsya sanātanam:
dānaṃ dīkṣā ca yajñeṣu tanu|tyāgo mṛdheṣu ca.

looked at his other three hundred and fifty mothers. They were just as deeply anguished, and, with hands cupped in reverence, the son of Dasha·ratha addressed them with these righteous words: "If in our living together I ever showed you any rudeness, however unwittingly, please forgive me for it. I bid you all farewell."

As Rághava spoke these words, a scream broke out like 34.35
the crying of curlews, from the wives of the lord of men. The palace of Dasha·ratha, where once tambourines and bass drums rumbled like storm clouds, was now filled with lamentation and wailing, so bitter was the sorrow of this calamity.

In desolation Rama, Sita and Lákshmana clasped the 35.1
feet of the king. Then, cupping their hands, they reverently circled him. After taking leave of him, Sita and righteous Rághava, distraught with grief, did obeisance to his mother. Directly after his brother, Lákshmana did obeisance to Kausálya and then clasped the feet of his own mother, Sumítra. As great-armed Lákshmana Saumítri paid reverence to his mother, she wept and kissed him on the forehead, and with his welfare at heart she said to him: "You are determined 35.5
to live in the forest out of deep loyalty to your loved ones. Do not be inattentive, my son, when your brother Rama is on his way. He is your one refuge in times of both adversity and prosperity, my blameless son. The way of righteousness good people follow in the world is just this: submission to the will of one's elders. Remember, too, the conduct that has been the age-old custom of this House: liberality, consecration for sacrifice, and readiness to give up one's life

Rāmaṃ Daśarathaṃ viddhi māṃ viddhi Janak'|ātmajām
Ayodhyām aṭavīṃ viddhi gaccha tāta yathā|sukham.»

Tataḥ Sumantraḥ Kākutsthaṃ prāñjalir vākyam abravīt
vinīto vinayajñaś ca Mātalir vāsavaṃ yathā:
«Ratham āroha bhadraṃ te rāja|putra mahā|yaśaḥ
kṣipraṃ tvāṃ prāpayiṣyāmi yatra māṃ Rāma vakṣyasi.
Catur|daśa hi varṣāṇi vastavyāni vane tvayā
tāny upakramitavyāni yāni devy" âsi coditaḥ.»

Taṃ rathaṃ sūrya|saṃkāśaṃ Sītā hṛṣṭena cetasā
āruroha varārohā kṛtv" âlaṃkāram ātmanaḥ.
Tath" âiv' āyudha|jātāni bhrātṛbhyāṃ kavacāni ca
rath'|ôpasthe pratinyasya sa|carma|kaṭhinaṃ ca tat.
Sītā|tṛtīyān ārūḍhān dṛṣṭvā dhṛṣṭam acodayat
Sumantraḥ saṃmatān aśvān vāyu|vega|samāñ jave.

Prayāte tu mah"|âraṇyaṃ cira|rātrāya Rāghave
babhūva nagare mūrcchā bala|mūrcchā janasya ca.
Tat samākula|saṃbhrāntaṃ matta|saṃkupita|dvipam
haya|śiñjita|nirghoṣaṃ puram āsīn mahā|svanam.
Tataḥ sa|bāla|vṛddhā sā purī parama|pīḍitā
Rāmam ev' âbhidudrāva gharm'|ārtaḥ salilaṃ yathā.
Pārśvataḥ pṛṣṭhataś c' âpi lambamānās tadunmukhāḥ
bāṣpa|pūrṇa|mukhāḥ sarve tam ūcur bhṛśa|duḥkhitāḥ:
«Saṃyaccha vājināṃ raśmīn sūta yāhi śanaiḥ śanaiḥ!
mukhaṃ drakṣyāmi Rāmasya durdarśaṃ no bhaviṣyati.

in battle. Look upon Rama as Dasha·ratha, look upon Jánaka's daughter as me, look upon the woods as Ayódhya. Go in happiness, my dear son."

Then Sumántra, hands cupped in reverence and with the deference in which he was practiced, addressed Kakútstha as Mátali might address Vásava: "Be pleased to mount the chariot, glorious prince. I will at once convey you wherever you tell me, Rama. For you must now commence the fourteen years of life in the forest, which the queen has forced upon you."

When fair-hipped Sita had finished ornamenting herself, with a cheerful heart she boarded the chariot that stood gleaming like the sun. Sumántra placed inside the chariot-box the brothers' collection of weapons, their armor and the leather basket, and when he saw they both had boarded with Sita, he briskly urged on the superb horses, in speed like the rushing wind.

As Rághava set out for his long stay in the great wilderness, a wave of stupor passed through the city, overwhelming the army and the people. There was turmoil and confusion in the town, the elephants became wild and unruly, and the horses clangored noisily. The town was in utter agony. The people—young and old alike—began to run straight toward Rama, as men tormented by summer's heat run toward water. Clinging to the sides and the back, they raised their tearful faces and in their bitter sorrow they all cried out: "Charioteer, draw in the horses' reins, go slowly, slowly! Let us look upon Rama's face, for soon it will be lost to our sight. Surely the heart of Rama's mother must be made of iron if it does not break though her godlike

35.20 Āyasaṃ hṛdayaṃ nūnaṃ Rāma|mātur asaṃśayam
yad deva|garbha|pratime vanaṃ yāti na bhidyate.
Kṛta|kṛtyā hi Vaidehī chāy" êv' ânugatā patim
na jahāti ratā dharme merum arka|prabhā yathā.
Aho Lakṣmaṇa siddh'|ârthaḥ satatāṃ priya|vādinam
bhrātaraṃ deva|saṃkāśaṃ yas tvaṃ paricariṣyasi.
Mahaty eṣā hi te siddhir eṣa c' âbhyudayo mahān
eṣa svargasya mārgaś ca yad enam anugacchasi»
evaṃ vadantas te soḍhuṃ na śekur bāṣpam āgatam.

Atha rājā vṛtaḥ strībhir dīnābhir dīna|cetanaḥ
nirjagāma: «priyaṃ putraṃ drakṣyām' îti» bruvan gṛhāt
35.25 Śuśruve c' âgrataḥ strīṇāṃ rudantīnāṃ mahā|svanaḥ
yathā nādaḥ kareṇūnāṃ baddhe mahati kuñjare.
Pitā ca rājā Kākutsthaḥ śrīmān sannas tadā babhau
paripūrṇaḥ śaśī kāle grahen' ôpapluto yathā.
Tato halahalā|śabdo jajñe Rāmasya pṛṣṭhataḥ
narāṇāṃ prekṣya rājānaṃ sīdantaṃ bhṛśa|duḥkhitam.
«Hā Rām' êti» janāḥ ke cid «Rāma|māt" êti» c' âpare
antaḥ|puraṃ samṛddhaṃ ca krośantaṃ paryadevayan.

Anvīkṣamāṇo Rāmas tu viṣaṇṇaṃ bhrānta|cetasaṃ
rājānaṃ mātaraṃ c' âiva dadarś' ânugatau pathi
dharma|pāśena saṃkṣiptaḥ prakāśaṃ n' âbhyudaikṣata.
35.30 Padātinau ca yān'|ârhāv aduḥkh'|ârhau sukh'|ôcitau
dṛṣṭvā saṃcodayām āsa «śīghraṃ yāh' îti» sārathim.
Na hi tat puruṣa|vyāghro duḥkhadaṃ darśanaṃ pituḥ
mātuś ca sahituṃ śaktas totr'|ârdita iva dvipaḥ.

child is going off to the forest. Vaidéhi has accomplished her purpose—she follows her lord like a shadow, earnest in doing what is right, and can no more leave him than sunlight can leave Mount Meru. Ah, Lákshmana, you have achieved your goal; you will have the chance to serve your kind-spoken, godlike brother all the while. This is a great achievement for you, a great blessing, the way to heaven, that you are following after him." As they said these things their tears welled up and they could not hold them back.

Then in his desolation the king, accompanied by his desolate wives, emerged from the palace exclaiming, "Let me see my beloved son!" Before him could be heard a mighty 35.25
din of women crying, like the wailing of cow elephants when their great bull is captured. And his father, majestic King Kakútstha, looked as feeble as the full, hare-marked moon dimmed at the hour of eclipse. Then, behind Rama, a tumultuous clamor broke out among the men as they saw the king collapsing under his heavy sorrow. "Oh Rama!" some of the people wailed, and others, "Oh mother of Rama!" while all the women of the inner chamber lamented over the crying king.

Rama glanced back and saw his mother trailing behind and the king, too, dazed and wretched. But he was caught up in the bonds of righteousness and dared not gaze at them openly. They were on foot who should have ridden, who 35.30
had known only comfort and did not deserve such suffering. And when he saw them he exhorted the charioteer, crying out, "Go faster!" For the tiger among men could not bear the heart-rending sight of his father and mother; it was like a goad tormenting an elephant. Kausálya ran weeping after

Tathā rudantīṃ Kausalyāṃ rathaṃ tam anudhāvatīm
krośantīṃ «Rāma Rām' êti hā Sīte Lakṣmaṇ' êti» ca
asakṛt praikṣata tadā nṛtyantīm iva mātaram.
«Tiṣṭh' êti» rājā cukroṣa «yāhi yāh' îti» Rāghavaḥ
Sumantrasya babhūv' ātmā cakrayor iva c' ântarā.
«‹n' âśrauṣam iti› rājānam upālabdho 'pi vakṣyasi
ciraṃ duḥkhasya pāpiṣṭham iti» Rāmas tam abravīt.
35.35 Rāmasya sa vacaḥ kurvann anujñāpya ca taṃ janam
vrajato 'pi hayāñ śīghraṃ codayām āsa sārathiḥ.
Nyavartata jano rājño Rāmaṃ kṛtvā pradakṣiṇam
manas" âpy aśru|vegaiś ca na nyavartata mānuṣam.
«Yam icchet punar āyāntaṃ n' âinaṃ dūram anuvrajet
ity» amātyā mahā|rājam ūcur Daśarathaṃ vacaḥ.
Teṣāṃ vacaḥ sarva|guṇ'|ôpapannaṃ
prasvinna|gātraḥ praviṣaṇṇa|rūpaḥ
niśamya rājā kṛpaṇaḥ sa|bhāryo
vyavasthitas taṃ sutam īkṣamāṇaḥ.

36.1 Tasmiṃs tu puruṣa|vyāghre niṣkrāmati kṛt'|âñjalau
ārta|śabdo hi saṃjajñe strīṇām antaḥ|pure mahān.
«A|nāthasya janasy' âsya durbalasya tapasvinaḥ
yo gatiṃ śaraṇaṃ c' āsīt sa nāthaḥ kva nu gacchati?
Na krudhyaty abhiśasto 'pi krodhanīyāni varjayan
kruddhān prasādayan sarvān samaduḥkhaḥ kva gacchati?
Kausalyāyāṃ mahā|tejā yathā mātari vartate
tathā yo vartate 'smāsu mah"|ātmā kva nu gacchati?
36.5 Kaikeyyā kliśyamānena rājñā saṃcodito vanam
paritrātā janasy' âsya jagataḥ kva nu gacchati?
Aho niścetano rājā jīva|lokasya saṃpriyam

the chariot, crying "Rama, Rama! Oh Sita, Lákshmana!" He glanced back often at his mother, who seemed almost to be dancing. With the king crying, "Stop!" and Rághava, "Go on! Keep going!," Sumántra's very soul seemed caught between two wheels. "You can tell the king you did not hear, if he should rebuke you," Rama said to him. "To prolong sorrow is the worst thing of all." He did as Rama told him, 35.35
and taking leave of the people, the charioteer urged on the already racing horses.

After they had reverently circled Rama, the king's people did turn back, but their hearts did not, nor the rush of their tears. To the great king Dasha·ratha his ministers then said, "A person one hopes to see returning should not be followed out too far." The king listened to what they said and, despondent and wretched, his body bathed in sweat, he halted with his wives and gazed out after his perfect son.

When, with hands cupped in reverence, the tiger among 36.1
men was departing, a loud cry of anguish broke out from the women of the inner chamber. "Where can our defender be going, he who was the recourse and refuge of this weak, defenseless and miserable people? He never grows angry, whatever the insult, he avoids giving cause for anger, he calms the angry and shares every sorrow—where is he going? The mighty prince who treats us as he treats his own mother Kausálya—where can the great man be going? Kai- 36.5
kéyi hounded the king until he drove him into the forest. Where can the guardian of this people, of the entire world, be going? The king must be mad to exile Rama to a life in the forest, a righteous prince, devoted to truth and who is

dharmyaṃ satya|vrataṃ Rāmaṃ vana|vāso pravatsyati.»
Iti sarvā mahiṣyas tā vivatsā iva dhenavaḥ
ruruduś c' âiva duḥkh'|ārtāḥ sa|svaraṃ ca vicukruśuḥ.
Sa tam antaḥ|pure ghoram ārta|śabdaṃ mahī|patiḥ
putra|śok'|âbhisaṃtaptaḥ śrutvā c' āsīt suduḥkhitaḥ.
N' âgni|hotrāṇy ahūyanta sūryaś c' ântaradhīyata
vyasṛjan kavalān nāgā gāvo vatsān na pāyayan.
36.10 Triśaṅkur Lohitāṅgaś ca Bṛhaspati|Budhāv api
dāruṇāḥ Somam abhyetya grahāḥ sarve vyavasthitāḥ
Nakṣatrāṇi gat'|ârcīṃṣi grahāś ca gata|tejasaḥ
Viśākhāś ca sa|dhūmāś ca nabhasi pracakāśire.
Akasmān nāgaraḥ sarvo jano dainyam upāgamat
āhāre vā vihāre vā na kaś cid akaron manaḥ.
Bāṣpa|paryākula|mukho rāja|mārga|gato janaḥ
na hṛṣṭo lakṣyate kaś cit sarvaḥ śoka|parāyaṇaḥ.
Na vāti pavanaḥ śīto na śaśī saumya|darśanaḥ
na sūryas tapate lokaṃ sarvaṃ paryākulaṃ jagat.
36.15 An|arthinaḥ sutāḥ strīṇāṃ bhartāro bhrātaras tathā
sarve sarvaṃ parityajya Rāmam ev' ânvacintayan.
Ye tu Rāmasya suhṛdaḥ sarve te mūḍha|cetasaḥ
śoka|bhāreṇa c' ākrāntāḥ śayanaṃ na juhus tadā.
Tatas tv Ayodhyā rahitā mah"|ātmanā
puraṃdareṇ' êva mahī sa|parvatā
cacāla ghoraṃ bhaya|bhāra|pīḍitā
sa|nāga|yodh"|âśva|gaṇā nanāda ca.

loved by every living soul on earth." So all the queens, like cows who have lost their calves, wept in the torment of their sorrow, and shrilly wailed.

Already inflamed with grief for his son, the lord of the land grew more sorrowful, still hearing the dreadful cry of anguish from the women of the inner chamber. No fire offerings were offered, and the sun vanished. Elephants let their fodder drop, cows would not suckle their calves. The 36.10
constellation Tri·shanku, the planets Lohitánga, Brihas·pati and Budha, too, all took ominous positions over the moon. The stars lost their radiance, the planets lost their glow, and the constellation Vishákha shone, clouded by smoke, in the sky. A wave of despair swept suddenly over all the people of the city, and no one gave any thought to nourishment or amusements. The faces of the people on the royal highway were awash with tears. No one showed any sign of delight; all were lost in grief. The cool breeze stopped blowing, the hare-marked moon no longer looked serene, the sun did not warm the world, the universe was in chaos. Husbands 36.15
became indifferent to their wives, children became indifferent, and brothers, too. All turned their back on everyone else and gave their thoughts to Rama alone.

As for Rama's friends, they were all bewildered; crushed by the weight of their grief, they could not rise from where they lay fallen. Abandoned by the great prince, Ayódhya, with all its hosts of soldiers and herds of horses and elephants, was tormented by a heavy weight of fear and began to quake dreadfully and resound, just as the earth would, mountains and all, if abandoned by Indra, breaker of fortresses.

37–42
AYÓDHYA GRIEVES

37.1 Yāvat tu niryatas tasya rajo|rūpam adṛśyata
n' Âivekṣvāku|varas tāvat saṃjahār' ātma|cakṣuṣī
Yāvad rājā priyaṃ putraṃ paśyaty atyanta|dhārmikam
tāvad vyavardhat' êv' âsya dharaṇyāṃ putra|darśane
Na paśyati rajo 'py asya yadā Rāmasya bhūmipaḥ
tad" ārtaś ca viṣaṇṇaś ca papāta dharaṇī|tale
Tasya dakṣiṇam anvagāt Kausalyā bāhum aṅganā
vāmaṃ c' âsyānvagāt pārśvaṃ Kaikeyī Bharata|priyā
37.5 Tāṃ nayena ca saṃpanno dharmeṇa vinayena ca
uvāca rājā Kaikeyīṃ samīkṣya vyathit'|êndriyaḥ:
«Kaikeyi mā mamāṅgāni sprākṣīs tvaṃ duṣṭa|cāriṇī
na hi tvāṃ draṣṭum icchāmi na bhāryā na ca bāndhavī.
Ye ca tvām upajīvanti n' âhaṃ teṣāṃ na te mama
keval'|ârtha|parāṃ hi tvāṃ tyakta|dharmāṃ tyajāmy aham.
Agṛhṇāṃ yac ca te pāṇim agniṃ paryaṇayaṃ ca yat
anujānāmi tat sarvam asmiśl loke paratra ca.
Bharataś cet pratītaḥ syād rājyaṃ prāpy' êdam avyayam
yan me sa dadyāt pitr|arthaṃ mā mā tad dattam āgamat.»
37.10 Atha reṇu|samuddhvastaṃ tam utthāpya nar'|âdhipam
nyavartata tadā devī Kausalyā śoka|karśitā.
Hatv" êva brāhmaṇaṃ kāmāt spṛṣṭv" âgnim iva pāṇinā
anvatapyata dharm'|ātmā putraṃ saṃcintya tāpasaṃ.
Nivṛty' âiva nivṛty' âiva sīdato ratha|vartmasu
rājño n' âtibabhau rūpaṃ grastasy' âṃśumato yathā.
Vilalāpa ca duḥkh'|ārtaḥ priyaṃ putram anusmaran
nagar'|ântam anuprāptaṃ buddhvā putram ath' âbravīt:

Now, as Rama was departing he raised a cloud of dust, 37.1
and as long as it was visible the best of the Ikshvákus would not turn his eyes away. As long as the king could see his beloved, righteous son, he seemed to stand firm on the ground just to have him in sight. But once the lord of the land could no longer see even Rama's dust, in anguish and despair he fell to the ground. His wife Kausálya came up and stood by his right arm, and to his left side came Kaikéyi, whose only love was for Bhárata.

The king, a man of prudence, righteousness and cour- 37.5
tesy, stared at Kaikéyi, his senses reeling, and said: "Kaikéyi, do not touch me, evil woman. I do not want to see you. You are not my wife, you have no relationship to me. And your dependents have nothing to do with me, nor I with them. In pure selfishness you repudiated righteousness, and I repudiate you. Once I took your hand and led you round the marriage fire, but now I renounce it all, both in this world and the next. And if Bhárata should be pleased at securing sovereign kingship, may any funeral offering he makes never reach me."

As the lord of men lay coated with dust, Queen Kausálya 37.10
helped him up and, racked with grief, began to lead him home. As if he had intentionally slain a *brahman*, or held his hand in a fire, the righteous king burned with remorse to think of his son living a life of asceticism. Again and again he turned back, he collapsed in the ruts of the chariot, and his figure, like the sun's at the hour of eclipse, lost all its splendor. Tortured with sorrow, he began to lament as he thought with longing of his beloved son. He imagined his son to be returning to the city, and said: "I see the tracks

«Vāhanānāṃ ca mukhyānāṃ vahatāṃ taṃ mam' ātmajam
padāni pathi dṛśyante sa mah"|ātmā na dṛśyate.
37.15 Sa nūnaṃ kva cid ev' âdya vṛkṣa|mūlam upāśritaḥ
kāṣṭhaṃ vā yadi v" âśmānam upadhāya śayiṣyate.
Utthāsyati ca medinyāḥ kṛpaṇaḥ pāṃśu|guṇṭhitaḥ
viniḥśvasan prasravaṇāt kareṇūnām iva ṛṣabhaḥ.
Drakṣyanti nūnaṃ puruṣā dīrgha|bāhuṃ vane|carāḥ
Rāmam utthāya gacchantaṃ loka|nātham a|nāthavat.
Sa|kāmā bhava Kaikeyi vidhavā rājyam āvasa
na hi taṃ puruṣa|vyāghraṃ vinā jīvitum utsahe.»

Ity evaṃ vilapan rājā jan'|âughen' âbhisaṃvṛtaḥ
apasnāta iv' âriṣṭaṃ praviveśa pur'|ôttamam.
37.20 Śūnya|catvara|veśm'|ântāṃ saṃvṛt'|āpaṇa|devatām
klānta|durbala|duḥkh'|ārtāṃ n' âtyākīrṇa|mahā|pathām.
Tām avekṣya purīṃ sarvām Rāmam ev' ânucintayan
vilapan prāviśad rājā gṛhaṃ sūrya iv' âmbudam.
Mahā|hradam iv' âkṣobhyaṃ suparṇena hṛt'|ôragam
Rāmeṇa rahitaṃ veśma Vaidehyā Lakṣmaṇena ca.

«Kausalyāyā gṛhaṃ śīghraṃ Rāma|mātur nayantu mām
iti» bruvantaṃ rājānam anayan dvāra|darśitaḥ.
Tatas tatra praviṣṭasya Kausalyāyā niveśanam
adhiruhy' âpi śayanaṃ babhūva lulitaṃ manaḥ.
37.25 Tac ca dṛṣṭvā mahā|rājo bhujam udyamya vīryavān
uccaiḥ svareṇa cukrośa: «hā Rāghava jahāsi mām!

in the road made by the splendid horses carrying my great son, but I do not see him. No, he is probably now resting somewhere, at the foot of a tree, where he will sleep using a log or perhaps a boulder for his pillow. Wretched and caked with dirt he will heave a sigh as he rises from the ground, like the bull of an elephant herd from out of a mountain stream. Men who live in the forest will probably be watching as long-armed Rama, the defender of the world, gets up and pushes on defenselessly. I hope you are satisfied, Kaikéyi. Now inhabit the kingdom a widow. For without the tiger among men I cannot bear to live."

So the king lamented, and, surrounded by a flood of people, he reentered the best of cities, the way a mourner enters a cemetery. The squares and courtyards were empty, the shops and temples closed, the thoroughfares nearly deserted, the people haggard, feeble and racked with sorrow—such was the sight that met the king's eyes. But his thoughts were for Rama alone and, lost in lamentation, he entered his dwelling, like the sun passing behind a cloud. Without Rama, Vaidéhi and Lákshmana his chamber seemed like a great, placid pool from which Supárna has snatched the serpents.

"Quickly take me to the dwelling of Kausálya, Rama's mother," the king demanded, and the watchmen took him. He entered Kausálya's chamber and lay upon the couch, and his mind began to reel. Looking around, the great and mighty king reached out his arms and cried at the top of his voice, "Oh Rághava, you have abandoned me! How lucky those good men who will be alive at the hour when Rama comes back, who will see him and embrace him. I cannot

Sukhitā bata taṃ kālaṃ jīviṣyanti nar'|ôttamāḥ
pariṣvajanto ye Rāmaṃ drakṣyanti punar āgatam
Na tvāṃ paśyāmi kausalye! sādhu māṃ pāṇinā spṛśa
Rāmaṃ me 'nugatā dṛṣṭir ady' âpi na nivartate.»
Taṃ Rāmam ev' ânuvicintayantaṃ
samīkṣya devī śayane nar'|êndram
upopaviśy' âdhikam ārta|rūpā
viniḥśvasantī vilalāpa kṛcchraṃ.

38.1 Tataḥ samīkṣya śayane sannaṃ śokena pārthivam
Kausalyā putra|śok'|ārtā tam uvāca mahī|patim:
«Rāghavo nara|śārdūla viṣam uptvā dvijihvavat
vicariṣyati Kaikeyī nirmukt" êva hi pannagī.
Vivāsya Rāmaṃ subhagā labdha|kāmā samāhitā
trāsayiṣyati māṃ bhūyo duṣṭ'|âhir iva veśmani.
Atha sma nagare Rāmaś caran bhaikṣaṃ gṛhe vaset!
kāma|kāro varaṃ dātum api dāsaṃ mam' ātmajam.
38.5 Pātayitvā tu Kaikeyyā Rāmaṃ sthānād yath"|êṣṭataḥ
pradiṣṭo rakṣasāṃ bhāgaḥ parvaṇīv' āhit'|âgninā.
Gaja|rāja|gatir vīro mahā|bāhur dhanurdharaḥ
vanam āviśate nūnaṃ sa|bhāryaḥ saha|Lakṣmaṇaḥ.
Vane tv adṛṣṭa|duḥkhānāṃ Kaikeyy" ânumate tvayā
tyaktānāṃ vana|vāsāya kā nv avasthā bhaviṣyati?
Te ratna|hīnās taruṇāḥ phala|kāle vivāsitāḥ
kathaṃ vatsyanti kṛpaṇāḥ phala|mūlaiḥ kṛt'|âśanāḥ?

see you, Kausálya! Oh please touch me with your hand. My sight has followed after Rama and has not yet returned." Seeing the lord of men on the couch lost in thoughts of Rama, the queen sat down close beside him, in the greatest anguish. She heaved a deep sigh and then began to lament bitterly.

KAUSÁLYA GAZED at the lord of the land as he lay on the 38.1
couch prostrate with grief. Racked with grief for her son, she spoke:

"Now that Kaikéyi like a fork-tongued viper has spit her venom on Rághava, the tiger among men, she will behave like a snake that has shed its skin. Now that she has had her way and exiled Rama, the charming creature will apply herself to further terrorizing me, like a vicious serpent in the house. If only Rama could have lived at home though it meant his begging in the city streets! You had the freedom to grant such a boon, which at the worst had made my son a slave. But you let Kaikéyi at her own sweet pleasure throw 38.5
Rama from his place and assign him as a portion for *rákshasa*s, the way a sacrificer at the half-month rites throws a portion away for them.

My mighty son, the great-armed bowman with a step like a king of elephants, is probably now entering the forest with his wife and Lákshmana. They have never known the sorrows of the forest, but you yielded to Kaikéyi and abandoned them to a life in the forest. What can be their lot? Stripped of everything of value and exiled at the very hour of their triumph, how are these three wretched young people to live with nothing but fruit and roots to eat? If

Apīdānīṃ sa kālaḥ syān mama śoka|kṣayaḥ śivaḥ
sa|bhāryaṃ yat saha bhrātrā paśyeyam iha Rāghavam.
Śrutv" âiv' ôpasthitau vīrau kad"Âyodhyā bhaviṣyati
yaśasvinī hṛṣṭa|janā sūcchrita|dhvaja|mālinī?
Kadā prekṣya nara|vyāghrāv araṇyāt punar āgatau
nandiṣyati purī hṛṣṭā samudra iva parvaṇi?
Kad" Âyodhyāṃ mahā|bāhuḥ purīṃ vīraḥ pravekṣyati
puraskṛtya rathe Sītāṃ vṛṣabho go|vadhūm iva?
Kadā prāṇi|sahasrāṇi rāja|mārge mam' ātmajau
lājair avakariṣyanti praviśantāv ariṃ|damau?
Kadā sumanasaḥ kanyā dvijātīnāṃ phalāni ca
pradiśantyaḥ purīṃ hṛṣṭāḥ kariṣyanti pradakṣiṇam?
Kadā pariṇato buddhyā vayasā c' âmara|prabhaḥ
abhyupaiṣyati dharmajñas tri|varṣa iva māṃ lalan?
Niḥsaṃśayaṃ mayā manye purā vīra kadaryayā
pātu kāmeṣu vatseṣu mātṝṇāṃ śātitāḥ stanāḥ.
S" âhaṃ gaur iva siṃhena vivatsā vatsalā kṛtā
Kaikeyyā puruṣa|vyāghra bāla|vats" êva gaur balāt.
Na hi tāvad guṇair juṣṭaṃ sarva|śāstra|viśāradam
eka|putrā vinā putram ahaṃ jīvitum utsahe.
Na hi me jīvite kiṃ cit sāmarthyam iha kalpyate
apaśyantyāḥ priyaṃ putraṃ mahā|bāhuṃ mahā|balam.
Ayaṃ hi māṃ dīpayate samutthitas
tanūja|śoka|prabhavo hut'|âśanaḥ
mahīm imāṃ raśmibhir uttama|prabho
yathā nidāghe bhagavān divākaraḥ.»

only it were now the hour that mercifully will end my grief, when I set eyes on Rághava again with his wife and brother. When will Ayódhya hear that the two mighty brothers have come back and once again be a glorious city, crowded with delighted people, garlanded with banners? When will the city see those tigers among men returned from the forest and exult in delight like the ocean on a full-moon night?

When will the great-armed mighty prince enter the city of Ayódhya with Sita on the chariot ahead of him, like a cow before her bull? When will people by the thousand go out onto the royal highway to scatter parched grain upon my two foe-taming sons as they make their entrance? When will maidens proffer flowers and fruit to the *brahman*s and reverently circle the city in delight? When will he come back to me—my righteous son, young as a deathless god yet with an old man's wisdom and boyishness that warms my heart?

I guess, my mighty husband, yes, it must no doubt be that once upon a time, when calves were thirsting to drink, I ruthlessly hacked off the udders of the cows, their mothers. And so now, tiger among men, I who love my child so have been made childless by Kaikéyi, as brutally as a lion might do to a cow with a young calf. For I have but one son—he is gifted with every virtue, a master of all learning—and without my son I cannot bear to live. I have not the least bit of strength to live in this world if I cannot see my beloved and mighty great-armed son. Here, see, a fire kindled by grief for my son has burst forth and is ravaging me, as the earth is ravaged in summertime by the rays of the blazing, holy sun that brings the day."

39.1 VILAPANTĪṂ TATHĀ TĀṂ TU
Kausalyāṃ pramad”|ôttamām
idaṃ dharme sthitā dharmyaṃ
Sumitrā vākyam abravīt:

«Tav’ ārye sad|guṇair yuktaḥ putraḥ sa puruṣ’|ôttamaḥ
kiṃ te vilapiten’ âivaṃ kṛpaṇaṃ ruditena vā?
Yas tav’ ārye gataḥ putras tyaktvā rājyaṃ mahā|balaḥ
sādhu kurvan mah”|ātmānaṃ pitaraṃ satya|vādinām.
Śiṣṭair ācarite samyak śaśvat pretya phal’|ôdaye
Rāmo dharme sthitaḥ śreṣṭho na sa śocyaḥ kadā cana.
39.5 Vartate c’ ôttamāṃ vṛttiṃ Lakṣmaṇo ’smin sad” ânaghaḥ
dayāvān sarva|bhūteṣu lābhas tasya mah”|ātmanaḥ.
Araṇya|vāse yad duḥkhaṃ jānatī vai sukh’|ôcitā
anugacchati Vaidehī dharm’|ātmānaṃ tav’ ātmajam.

Kīrti|bhūtāṃ patākāṃ yo loke bhrāmayati prabhuḥ
dama|satya|vrata|paraḥ kiṃ na prāptas tav’ ātmajaḥ?
Vyaktaṃ Rāmasya vijñāya śaucaṃ māhātmyam uttamam
na gātram aṃśubhiḥ sūryaḥ saṃtāpayitum arhati.
Śivaḥ sarveṣu kāleṣu kānanebhyo viniḥsṛtaḥ
Rāghavaṃ yukta|śīt’|ôṣṇaḥ seviṣyati sukho ’nilaḥ.
39.10 Śayānam an|aghaṃ rātrau pit” êv’ âbhipariṣvajan
raśmibhiḥ saṃspṛśañ śītaiś candramā hlādayiṣyati.
Dadau c’ âstrāṇi divyāni yasmai brahmā mah”|âujase
dānav’|êndraṃ hataṃ dṛṣṭvā Timidhvaja|sutaṃ raṇe.

While Kausálya, best of women, was lamenting in this 39.1
fashion, Sumítra, standing firm by what was right, addressed her with these righteous words:

"My noble lady, your son is the very best of men and truly virtuous. What need have you to lament like this and wretchedly weep? You should never grieve over Rama, my lady, so excellent a son. He left surrendering the kingship, powerful as he is, to ensure that his great father might be true to his word. He took his stand by righteousness as the learned scrupulously practice it, and which has its rewards everlastingly, at death. Blameless Lákshmana will be a bless- 39.5
ing to the great prince. He has always behaved with perfect propriety toward him, and he shows compassion to all creatures. Though Vaidéhi is fully aware how painful life in the wilderness is, though she has known only comfort, she is following your righteous son.

What gain has your mighty son failed to reap, who is waving the banner of his fame throughout the world by his self-restraint and devotion to truth? Clearly the sun will recognize Rama's purity and incomparable grandeur, and will not dare to burn his body with its rays. A pleasant breeze will attend on Rághava, blowing through the woodlands, gracious at all seasons, with temperate warmth or coolness. As the blameless prince sleeps at night, the moon like a 39.10
father will clasp him in its embrace, caress him with cool beams and refresh him. Then, too, the mighty prince was given divine weapons by Brahma, when he saw him slay in battle the lord of *dánavas*, Timi·dhvaja's son.

Pṛthivyā saha Vaidehyā śriyā ca puruṣa|ṛṣabhaḥ
kṣipraṃ tisṛbhir etābhiḥ saha Rāmo 'bhiṣekṣyate.
Duḥkhajaṃ visṛjanty asraṃ niṣkrāmantam udīkṣya yam
samutsrakṣyasi netrābhyāṃ kṣipram ānandajaṃ payaḥ.
Abhivādayamānaṃ taṃ dṛṣṭvā sa|suhṛdaṃ sutam
mud" âśru mokṣyase kṣipraṃ megha|lekh" êva vārṣikī.
39.15 Putras te varadaḥ kṣipram Ayodhyāṃ punar āgataḥ
karābhyāṃ mṛdu|pīnābhyāṃ caraṇau pīḍayiṣyati.»
Niśamya tal Lakṣmaṇa|mātṛ|vākyaṃ
Rāmasya mātur nara|deva|patnyāḥ
sadyaḥ śarīre vinanāśa śokaḥ
śarad|gato megha iv' âlpa|toyaḥ.

40.1 ANURAKTĀ MAH"|ĀTMĀNAṂ RĀMAṂ satya|parakramam
anujagmuḥ prayāntaṃ taṃ vana|vāsāya mānavāḥ.
Nivartite 'pi ca balāt suhṛd|varge ca rājini
n' âiva te saṃnyavartanta Rāmasy' ânugatā ratham.
Ayodhyā|nilayānāṃ hi puruṣāṇāṃ mahā|yaśāḥ
babhūva guṇa|saṃpannaḥ pūrṇa|candra iva priyaḥ.
Sa yācyamānaḥ Kākutsthaḥ svābhiḥ prakṛtibhis tadā
kurvāṇaḥ pitaraṃ satyaṃ vanam ev' ânvapadyata.
40.5 Avekṣamāṇaḥ sa|snehaṃ cakṣuṣā prapibann iva
uvāca Rāmaḥ snehena tāḥ prajāḥ svāḥ prajā iva:
«Yā prītir bahu|mānaś ca mayy Ayodhyā|nivāsinām
mat|priy'|ârthaṃ viśeṣeṇa Bharate sā niveśyatām.
Sa hi kalyāṇa cāritraḥ Kaikeyy|ānanda|vardhanaḥ
kariṣyati yathāvad vaḥ priyāṇi ca hitāni ca.

With the land, with Vaidéhi and majesty, with all these three in his possession will Rama, bull among men, soon be consecrated. Your eyes will soon drop joyful tears for the one you watched depart with tears of sorrow falling. Soon you will see your child and his loved ones greeting you, and you will shed tears of gladness like a string of clouds in the rains. Your son will soon return to Ayódhya to grant you 39.15
every boon, will soon bow down and clasp your feet with his firm and gentle hands."

After the mother of Rama, the wife of the god of men, had listened to the words of Lákshmana's mother, the grief in her suddenly dissipated, like a cloud in the autumn when it holds but little water.

Now, as the great prince Rama, who always strove for 40.1
truth, was setting out to make his life in the forest, men loyal to him continued to follow. Though the multitude of his loved ones and the king had been forced to turn back, these would not stop following Rama's chariot. For to the men who lived in Ayódhya the glorious and virtuous prince was as well loved as the full moon. His subjects kept pleading with him but Kakútstha, to ensure his father's truthfulness, would only press on to the forest.

Rama gazed at his people with affection, as if to drink 40.5
them in with his eyes. And he spoke to them affectionately as though they were his children: "Let the love and respect the residents of Ayódhya feel for me be transferred in full to Bhárata, as a kindness to me. Bhárata, the delight of Kaikéyi, is of exemplary conduct, and he will do all that is required to ensure your welfare and happiness. Though only a boy,

Jñāna|vṛddho vayo|bālo mṛdur vīrya|guṇ'|ânvitaḥ
anurūpaḥ sa vo bhartā bhaviṣyati bhayāpahaḥ.
Sa hi rāja|guṇair yukto yuva|rājaḥ samīkṣitaḥ
api c' âpi mayā śiṣṭaiḥ kāryaṃ vo bhartṛ|śāsanam.
Na ca tapyed yathā c' âsau vana|vāsaṃ gate mayi
mahā|rājas tathā kāryo mama priya|cikīrṣayā.»

Yathā yathā Dāśarathir dharmam ev' āsthito 'bhavat
tathā tathā prakṛtayo Rāmaṃ patim akāmayan.
Bāṣpeṇa pihitaṃ dīnaṃ Rāmaḥ Saumitriṇā saha
cakarṣ' êva guṇair baddhvā janaṃ punar iv' āsanam.
Te dvijās tri|vidhaṃ vṛddhā jñānena vayas" âujasā
vayaḥ|prakampa|śiraso dūrād ūcur idaṃ vacaḥ:
«Vahanto javanā Rāmaṃ bho bho jātyās turaṃ|gamāḥ
nivartadhvaṃ na gantavyaṃ! hitā bhavata bhartari
upavāhyas tu vo bhartā n' âpavāhyaḥ purād vanam.»
Evam ārta|pralāpāṃs tān vṛddhān pralapato dvijān
avekṣya sahasā Rāmo rathād avatatāra ha.
Padbhyām eva jagām' âtha sa|Sītaḥ saha|Lakṣmaṇaḥ
saṃnikṛṣṭa|pada|nyāso Rāmo vana|parāyaṇaḥ.
Dvijātīṃs tu padātīṃs tān Rāmaś cāritra|vatsalaḥ
na śaśāka ghṛṇā|cakṣuḥ parimoktuṃ rathena saḥ.

Gacchantam eva taṃ dṛṣṭvā
Rāmaṃ saṃbhrānta|mānasāḥ
ūcuḥ parama|saṃtaptā
Rāmaṃ vākyam idaṃ dvijāḥ.

he has an old man's wisdom, though gentle he is endowed with all the virtues of a hero. He will be a fit master for you and will shield you from all danger. He possesses all the virtues a king requires, and he has been recognized as prince regent. Then, too, as I myself have shown you, you must obey your master's order. And, finally, if you would do me a kindness, please take care that the great king does not suffer when I have gone to live in the forest."

But the more committed to righteousness Dasha·rathi showed himself to be, the more the subjects desired to have him as their lord. By their virtues Rama and Saumítri seemed to bind and draw to them the desolate, tearful people of the city. Now, certain *brahman*s who were elders on three counts—by their years, wisdom and authority—began to cry out from afar, their heads shaking with age: "Ho there, you purebred horses speeding away with Rama. Stop, turn back! Be good to your master. You should be carrying your master back, not away from the city to the forest." When Rama perceived the anguished outcry raised by the aged *brahman*s, he alighted at once from the chariot. Rama then, with Sita and Lákshmana, proceeded on foot, with measured tread, directing his attention wholly to the forest. For the *brahman*s were on foot, and Rama looked with pity on them. He so cherished propriety that he could not ride off and leave them.

Seeing that Rama only continued on, the *brahman*s were disconcerted and in deep agony they said to him: "The entire *brahman* order will follow you, best friend of *brahman*s, and these sacred fires will accompany you, borne on

«Brāhmaṇyaṃ kṛtsnam etat tvāṃ brahmaṇyam anugacchati
dvija|skandh'|âdhirūḍhās tvām agnayo 'py anuyānty amī.
Vājapeya|samutthāni chatrāṇy etāni paśya naḥ
pṛṣṭhato 'nuprayātāni haṃsān iva jal'|âtyaye.
An|avāpt'|ātapatrasya raśmi|saṃtāpitasya te
ebhiś chāyāṃ kariṣyāmaḥ svaiś chatrair vājapeyikaiḥ.
Yā hi naḥ satataṃ buddhir veda|mantr'|ânusāriṇī
tvat|kṛte sā kṛtā vatsa vana|vās'|ânusāriṇī.
Hṛdayeṣv avatiṣṭhante vedā ye naḥ paraṃ dhanam
vatsyanty api gṛheṣv eva dārāś cāritra|rakṣitāḥ.
Na punar niścayaḥ kāryas tvad|gatau sukṛtā matiḥ
tvayi dharma|vyapekṣe tu kiṃ syād dharmam avekṣitum?
Yācito no nivartasva haṃsa|śukla|śiroruhaiḥ
śirobhir nibhṛt'|ācāra mahī|patana|pāṃśulaiḥ.
Bahūnāṃ vitatā yajñā dvijānāṃ ya ih' āgatāḥ
teṣāṃ samāptir āyattā tava vatsa nivartane.
Bhaktimanti hi bhūtāni jaṃgam'|âjaṃgamāni ca
yācamāneṣu teṣu tvaṃ bhaktiṃ bhakteṣu darśaya.
Anugaṃtum aśaktās tvāṃ mūlair uddhata|veginaḥ
unnatā vāyuvegena vikrośantīva pādapāḥ.
Niśceṣṭ'|āhāra|saṃcārā vṛkṣ'|âika|sthāna|viṣṭhitāḥ
pakṣiṇo 'pi prayācante sarva|bhūt'|ânukampinam.»
Evaṃ vikrośatāṃ teṣāṃ dvijātīnāṃ nivartane
dadṛśe Tamasā tatra vārayantīva Rāghavam.

the shoulders of the twice-born. Just see the umbrellas given to us at the *Vaja·peya* rite, which are following along behind you like geese when the rains have ended. You never got your royal parasol, and, when the sun's rays are burning you, we will shade you with these, our own *Vaja·peya* umbrellas. We have always turned our minds to the study of the Vedic hymns, but now our minds are made up on your account, dear child, to turn to a life in the forest. Our greatest treasure, the Vedas, lies stored in our hearts; our wives shall stay at home protected by their chastity. Our decision will not be reconsidered; we have made up our minds to go with you. But, as you have always shown regard for righteousness, will any regard now be paid to what is right? 40.20

We have bowed our heads, white-haired as the wild goose and covered now with dust from falling prone upon the ground; we have pleaded with you to return, you who have always done what is proper. Many of the *brahman*s who have come here have already commenced sacrifices. Their consummation depends on your returning, dear child. All living things, moving and unmoving, are filled with devotion for you. Show your devotion to these devotees, who are pleading with you. The trees, unable to follow you because their roots prevent their movement, seem to be mourning as the gusting wind uplifts them. Even the birds have stopped flitting about and foraging for food. They sit in one place in the trees, pleading with you, who have always taken pity on all creatures." And, as the *brahman*s sent up this mournful wail in order to turn Rághava back, the Támasa River came into view to aid, so it seemed, in stopping him. 40.25 40.30

41.1 TATAS TU TAMASĀ TĪRAṂ RAMYAM ĀŚRITYA RĀGHAVAḤ
SĪTĀM UDVĪKṢYA SAUMITRIM IDAṂ VACANAM ABRAVĪT:
«IYAM ADYA NIŚĀ PŪRVĀ SAUMITRE PRASTHITĀ VANAM
VANA|VĀSASYA BHADRAṂ TE SA N' ÔTKAṆṬHITUM ARHASI.
PAŚYA ŚŪNYĀNY ARAṆYĀNI: RUDANT' ÎVA SAMANTATAḤ
YATHĀ|NILAYAM ĀYADBHIR NILĪNĀNI MṚGA|DVIJAIḤ.
ADY' ÂYODHYĀ TU NAGARĪ RĀJADHĀNĪ PITUR MAMA
SA|STRĪ|PUṂSĀ GATĀN ASMĀÑ ŚOCIṢYATI NA SAṂŚAYAḤ.
41.5 BHARATAḤ KHALU DHARM'|ĀTMĀ PITARAṂ MĀTARAṂ CA ME
DHARM'|ÂRTHA|KĀMA|SAHITAIR VĀKYAIR ĀŚVĀSAYIṢYATI.
BHARATASY' ÂNṚŚAṂSATVAṂ SAṂCINTY' ÂHAṂ PUNAḤ PUNAḤ
N' ÂNUŚOCĀMI PITARAṂ MĀTARAṂ C' ÂPI LAKṢMAṆA.
TVAYĀ KĀRYAṂ NARA|VYĀGHRA MĀM ANUVRAJATĀ KṚTAM
ANVEṢṬAVYĀ HI VAIDEHYĀ RAKṢAṆ'|ÂRTHE SAHĀYATĀ.
ADBHIR EVA TU SAUMITRE VATSYĀMY ADYA NIŚĀM IMĀM
ETADD HI ROCATE MAHYAṂ VANYE 'PI VIVIDHE SATI.»

EVAM UKTVĀ TU SAUMITRAṂ SUMANTRAM API RĀGHAVAḤ:
«APRAMATTAS TVAM AŚVEṢU BHAVA SAUMY' ÊTY» UVĀCA HA.
41.10 SO 'ŚVĀN SUMANTRAḤ SAṂYAMYA SŪRYE 'STAṂ SAMUPĀGATE
PRABHŪTA|YAVASĀN KṚTVĀ BABHŪVA PRATYANANTARAḤ.
UPĀSYATU ŚIVĀṂ SAṂDHYĀṂ DṚṢṬVĀ RĀTRIM UPASTHITĀM
RĀMASYA ŚAYANAṂ CAKRE SŪTAḤ SAUMITRIṆĀ SAHA.
TĀṂ ŚAYYĀṂ TAMASĀ|TĪRE VĪKṢYA VṚKṢA|DALAIḤ KṚTĀM
RĀMAḤ SAUMITRIṆĀṂ SĀRDHAṂ SA|BHĀRYAḤ SAṂVIVEŚA HA.
SABHĀRYAṂ SAṂPRASUPTAṂ TAṂ
BHRĀTARAṂ VĪKṢYA LAKṢMAṆAḤ
KATHAYĀM ĀSA SŪTĀYA

Now, when Rághava had reached the lovely bank of 41.1
the Támasa, with a glance at Sita he addressed Saumítri:
"Night has come to the forest now, the very first of our life
in the forest. But please, Saumítri, do not be sad. Look, the
woods are empty but all around they seem to weep: birds
and beasts are hidden within them, each gone to its own lair.
Surely the city of Ayódhya, my father's capital, will grieve
tonight, every man and woman, for us who have gone away.
But I know that righteous Bhárata will comfort my father 41.5
and mother, speaking words in harmony with what is right,
beneficial and desirable. I have been reflecting all the while
on Bhárata's good-heartedness, and I no longer feel grief for
my father, Lákshmana or even for my mother. You have
done your duty in accompanying me, tiger among men.
But let me seek your help, too, in looking after Vaidéhi. I
myself, however, will have nothing but water tonight. This
is what I prefer, though all kinds of forest fare are at hand."

So Rághava spoke to Saumítri, and, turning to Sumántra
he said, "Do not neglect the horses, dear friend." Sumántra 41.10
tethered the horses as the sun was setting, gave them abun-
dant fodder and then waited in attendance. When Rama
had worshipped the gracious twilight and saw night closing
in, the charioteer, with Saumítri's help, made a bed for him.
Escorted by Saumítri, Rama found the bed of leaves made
ready near the bank of the Támasa, and he and his wife then
retired. When Lákshmana saw that his brother had fallen
asleep with his wife, he engaged the charioteer in conver-
sation, talking about Rama's many virtues. Saumítri stayed
awake all night long, and even as the sun rose he was still
speaking of Rama's virtues with the charioteer on the bank

Rāmasya vividhān guṇān.
Jāgrato hy eva tāṃ rātriṃ Saumitrer udito raviḥ
sūtasya Tamasā|tīre Rāmasya bruvato guṇān.
Gokul'|ākula|tīrāyās Tamasāyā vidūrataḥ
avasat tatra tāṃ rātriṃ Rāmaḥ prakṛtibhiḥ saha.

Utthāya tu mahā|tejāḥ prakṛtīs tā niśāmya ca
abravīd bhrātaraṃ Rāmo Lakṣmaṇaṃ puṇya|lakṣaṇam:
«Asmad|vyapekṣān Saumitre nirapekṣān gṛheṣv api
vṛkṣa|mūleṣu saṃsuptān paśya Lakṣmaṇa sāmpratam.
Yath" âite niyamaṃ paurāḥ kurvanty asman|nivartane
api prāṇān asiṣyanti na tu tyakṣyanti niścayam.
Yāvad eva tu saṃsuptās tāvad eva vayaṃ laghu
ratham āruhya gacchāmaḥ panthānam a|kuto|bhayam.
Ato bhūyo 'pi n' êdānīm Ikṣvāku|pura|vāsinaḥ
svapeyur anuraktā māṃ vṛkṣa|mūlāni saṃśritāḥ.
Paurā hy ātma|kṛtād duḥkhād vipramocyā nṛp'|ātmajaiḥ
na tu khalv ātmanā yojyā duḥkhena pura|vāsinaḥ.»
Abravīl Lakṣmaṇo Rāmaṃ sākṣād dharmam iva sthitam:
«rocate me mahā|prājña kṣipram āruhyatām iti.»

Sūtas tataḥ saṃtvaritaḥ syandanaṃ tair hay'|ôttamaiḥ
yojayitv" âtha Rāmāya prāñjaliḥ pratyavedayat.
Mohan'|ârthaṃ tu paurāṇāṃ sūtaṃ Rāmo 'bravīd vacaḥ:
«udaṅmukhaḥ prayāhi tvaṃ ratham āsthāya sārathe.
Muhūrtaṃ tvaritaṃ gatvā nirgataya rathaṃ punaḥ
yathā na vidyuḥ paurā māṃ tathā kuru samāhitaḥ.»
Rāmasya vacanaṃ śrutvā tathā cakre sa sārathiḥ
pratyāgamya ca Rāmasya syandanaṃ pratyavedayat.
Taṃ syandanam adhiṣṭhāya Rāghavaḥ sapariccchadaḥ
śīghragām ākul'|āvartāṃ Tamasām ataran nadīm.

of the Támasa. There, at a little distance from the Támasa 41.15
where herds of cattle crowded the bank, Rama spent the night with his people.

And when, on rising, mighty Rama observed them, he said to his good brother Lákshmana: "Look at them now, Lákshmana, asleep under the trees. They care for us alone, Saumítri, caring nothing even for their own homes. So solemn is their commitment to turn us back that the townsmen would sooner throw their lives away than abandon their resolve. While they are still sleeping, we must board the chariot and quickly go, taking a path free from danger. No resident of the city of the Ikshvákus should now, or ever 41.20
again, have to sleep at the foot of a tree out of loyalty to me. A prince should spare his townsmen any troubles that are his affair alone. Surely he must not involve the residents of the city in his own trouble." Lákshmana replied to Rama as though it were Righteousness that stood embodied before his eyes: "I agree, my wise brother. Let us board at once."

In haste then the charioteer harnessed the splendid horses to the coach and, with hands cupped in reverence, directed Rama to it. But in order to confuse the townsmen Rama instructed the charioteer, "Board the chariot, Sumántra, and head northward. Hurry onward for a while, then circle back 41.25
on the chariot. You must take care to ensure that the townsmen do not know where I have gone." The charioteer did just as Rama told him, and on returning he directed Rama to the coach. Rághava boarded with all his equipment and crossed the swift-flowing, eddying Támasa. Once across, the great-armed, majestic prince entered upon a broad pathway,

Sa saṃtīrya mahā|bāhuḥ śrīmāñ śivam akaṇṭakam
prāpadyata mahā|mārgam abhayaṃ bhaya|darśinām.

Prabhātāyāṃ tu śarvaryāṃ paurās te Rāghavo vinā
śok'|ôpahata|niśceṣṭā babhūvur hata|cetasaḥ.
41.30 Śokaj'|âśru|paridyūnā vīkṣamāṇās tatas tataḥ
ālokam api Rāmasya na paśyanti sma duḥkhitāḥ.
Tato mārg'|ânusāreṇa gatvā kiṃ cit kṣaṇaṃ punaḥ
mārga|nāśād viṣādena mahatā samabhiplutaḥ.
Rathasya mārga|nāśena nyavartanta manasvinaḥ
«kim idaṃ? kiṃ kariṣyāmo? daiven' ôpahatā iti.»
Tato yathā|gaten' âiva mārgeṇa klānta|cetasaḥ
Ayodhyām agaman sarve purīṃ vyathita|saj|janām.

42.1 Anugamya nivṛttānāṃ Rāmaṃ nagara|vāsinām
udgatānīva sattvāni babhūvur a|manasvinām.
Svaṃ svaṃ nilayam āgamya putra|dāraiḥ samāvṛtāḥ
aśrūṇi mumucuḥ sarve bāṣpeṇa pihit'|ānanāḥ.
Na c' âhṛṣyan na c' āmodan vaṇijo na prasārayan
na c' âśobhanta paṇyāni n' âpacan gṛha|medhinaḥ.
Naṣṭaṃ dṛṣṭvā n' âbhyanandan vipulaṃ vā dhan'|āgamam
putraṃ prathamajaṃ labdhvā jananī n' âbhyanandata.
42.5 Gṛhe gṛhe rudantyaś ca bhartāraṃ gṛham āgatam
vyagarhayanto duḥkh'|ārtā vāgbhis totrair iva dvipān
«Kiṃ nu teṣāṃ gṛhaiḥ kāryaṃ kiṃ dāraiḥ kiṃ dhanena vā
putrair vā kiṃ sukhair v" âpi ye na paśyanti Rāghavam:

a gracious one free from obstacles and the dangers of dangerous beasts.

When night brightened into dawn and the townsmen found themselves without Rághava, their minds were stunned, and they were paralyzed by a crushing grief. Drenched 41.30
in tears of grief, they searched high and low, but to their bitter sorrow they caught not a glimpse of Rama. For a short while they followed the track, and when it gave out a wild despair swept over them. When the track of the chariot gave out, the sensible among them turned back, thinking, "What can this mean? What are we to do? Fate has crushed us." Then all of them, with weary hearts, returned the way they had come to the city of Ayódhya, where all good people were still in a state of shock.

So THE RESIDENTS of the city returned from following 42.1
Rama, but all their strength seemed to have gone, and they were left insensible. They went each to his own dwelling and there, surrounded by their wives and children, they all broke out in weeping, and their faces were bathed in tears. No one felt any delight or gladness, merchants would not display their wares, no goods were set out to catch the eye. Householders would have no meals prepared. People felt no joy at finding something long thought lost, or obtaining vast wealth. Mothers felt no joy at delivering a firstborn son.

In one house after another the women cried when their 42.5
husbands came home, and in the anguish of their sorrow they berated them with words as piercing as elephant goads: "What good are homes or wives or wealth, what good are

Ekaḥ sat|puruṣo loke Lakṣmaṇaḥ saha Sītayā
yo 'nugacchati Kākutsthaṃ Rāmaṃ paricaran vane?
Āpagāḥ kṛta|puṇyās tāḥ padminyaś ca sarāṃsi ca
yeṣu snāsyati Kākutstho vigāhya salilaṃ śuci.
Śobhayiṣyanti Kākutstham aṭavyo ramya|kānanāḥ
āpagāś ca mah"|ânūpāḥ s'|ânumantaś ca parvatāḥ.
Kānanaṃ v" âpi śailaṃ vā yaṃ Rāmo 'bhigamiṣyati
priy'|âtithim iva prāptaṃ n' âinaṃ śakṣyanty an|arcitum.
Vicitra|kusum'|āpīḍā bahu|mañjari|dhāriṇaḥ
akāle c' âpi mukhyāni puṣpāṇi ca phalāni ca
darśayiṣyanty anukrośād girayo Rāmam āgatam.
Vidarśayanto vividhān bhūyaś citrāṃś ca nirjharān
pādapāḥ parvat'|âgreṣu ramayiṣyanti Rāghavam.

Yatra Rāmo bhayaṃ n' âtra n' âsti tatra parābhavaḥ
sa hi śūro mahā|bāhuḥ putro Daśarathasya ca.
Purā bhavati no dūrād anugacchāma Rāghavam
pāda|cchāyā sukhā bhartus tādṛśasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
sa hi nātho janasy' âsya sa gatiḥ sa parāyaṇam.
Vayaṃ paricariṣyāmaḥ Sītāṃ yūyaṃ tu Rāghavam
iti» paura|striyo bhartṝn duḥkh'|ārtās tat tad abruvan:

«Yuṣmākaṃ Rāghavo 'raṇye yoga|kṣemaṃ vidhāsyati
Sītā nārī|janasy' âsya yoga|kṣemaṃ kariṣyati.
Ko nv anen' âpratītena s'|ôtkaṇṭhita|janena ca
saṃprīyet' âmanojñena vāsena hṛta|cetasā?
Kaikeyyā yadi ced rājyaṃ syād adharmyam a|nāthavat

sons or pleasures to those who have lost the sight of Rághava? The one decent man in the world is Lákshmana, who with Sita is following Rama Kakútstha to serve him in the forest. Fortunate the streams, the lotus ponds and lakes where Kakútstha will bathe, plunging into the pure water. The woodlands and the lovely groves will adorn Kakútstha, and so will the streams with their broad shores, and the steep-sloping mountains. Every hill or grove Rama visits 42.10
will treat him like a welcome guest and not fail to accord him hospitality. The mountains will be crowned with many-colored blossoms and bear clusters of bouquets when Rama comes, and in sympathy they will display for him choice fruits and flowers even out of season. They will afford him views of waterfalls as well, one after the other, and the trees on the summits will gladden Rághava.

Where Rama goes there is nothing to fear, and no one ever comes to grief. He is a great-armed hero and the son of Dasha·ratha. So let us follow Rághava before he is too far away from us. How pleasant the shadow of the feet of such a great master as he; for he is the one defender of this people, he their one recourse and refuge. We shall attend 42.15
on Sita, and you on Rághava." Such were the things the townsmen's wives told their husbands. And in the anguish of their sorrow they continued:

"Rághava will see to it that you are safe and sound in the wilderness, and Sita will do the same for us, the womenfolk. Who could find any joy in living here, where the people are filled with longing, a place so cheerless, so unpleasant and dispiriting? If, with our one defender gone and against all that is right, the kingship should come into

na hi no jīviten' ârthaḥ kutaḥ putraiḥ kuto dhanaiḥ?
Yayā putraś ca bhartā ca tyaktāv aiśvarya|kāraṇāt
kaṃ sā parihared anyaṃ Kaikeyī kula|pāṃsanī?
Kaikeyyā na vayaṃ rājye bhṛtakā nivasemahi
jīvantyā jātu jīvantyaḥ putrair api śapāmahe.
Yā putraṃ pārthiv'|êndrasya pravāsayati nirghṛṇā
kas tāṃ prāpya sukhaṃ jīved adharmyāṃ duṣṭa|cāriṇīm?
Na hi pravrajite Rāme jīviṣyati mahī|patiḥ
mṛte Daśarathe vyaktaṃ vilopas tad|anantaram.
Te viṣaṃ pibat' āloḍya kṣīṇa|puṇyāḥ sudurgatāḥ
Rāghavaṃ v" ânugacchadhvam a|śrutiṃ v" âpi gacchata.
Mithyā pravrājito Rāmaḥ sa|bhāryaḥ saha|Lakṣmaṇaḥ
Bharate saṃniṣṛṣṭāḥ smaḥ saunike paśavo yathā.»
Tās tathā vilapantyas tu nagare nāgara|striyaḥ
cukruśur bhṛśa|saṃtaptā mṛtyor iva bhay'|āgame.
Tathā striyo Rāma|nimittam āturā
    yathā sute bhrātari vā vivāsite
vilapya dīnā rurudur vicetasaḥ
    sutair hi tāsām adhiko hi so 'bhavat.

Kaikéyi's hands, we would have no further use for living, much less for children or riches. Kaikéyi, that disgrace to her family, renounced her son and husband both for the sake of kingly power. Why then should she be expected to spare anyone else?

We will never remain in the kingdom as servants to Kaikéyi, so long as she lives, or we do. Upon our sons we swear it. Who could live at ease under that unrighteous, wicked woman, so heartless that she forced into exile the son of the lord of kings? For with Rama banished, the lord of the land will not long survive, and in the wake of Dasharatha's death will clearly follow total devastation. Utterly impoverished, luckless men! Better to mix poison and take it now. For either you follow Rághava or you shall never be heard from again. Rama, his wife and Lákshmana have been treacherously banished, and all of us delivered up to Bhárata like livestock to the butcher."

Such was the lamentation raised throughout the town by the townsmen's wives, and they wailed in agony, as if they feared for their very lives. The women were as anguished on Rama's account as if a son of theirs or a brother had been exiled. Desolate, they lamented and madly wept, for he meant more to them, in fact, than their own sons.

43–50
THE HERMITAGE ON MOUNT CHITRA·KUTA

43.1 Rāmo 'pi rātri|śeṣeṇa ten' âiva mahad antaram
jagāma puruṣa|vyāghraḥ pitur ājñām anusmaran.
Tath" âiva gacchatas tasya vyapāyād rajanī śivā
upāsya sa śivāṃ saṃdhyāṃ viṣa|yāntaṃ vyagāhata.
Grāmān vikṛṣṭa|sīmāṃs tān puṣpitāni vanāni ca
paśyann atiyayau śīghraṃ śarair iva hay'|ôttamaiḥ
Śṛṇvan vāco manuṣyāṇāṃ grāma|saṃvāsa|vāsinām:
«rājānaṃ dhig Daśarathaṃ kāmasya vaśam āgatam!»
43.5 «Hā nṛśaṃsādya Kaikeyī pāpā pāp'|ânubandhinī
tīkṣṇā saṃbhinna|maryādā tīkṣṇe karmaṇi vartate.
Yā putram īdṛśaṃ rājñaḥ pravāsayati dhārmikam
vana vāse mahā|prājñaṃ s|ânukrośam atandritam.»
Etā vāco manuṣyāṇāṃ grāma|saṃvāsa|vāsinām
śṛṇvann atiyayau vīraḥ Kosalān Kosal'|ēśvaraḥ.
Tato Vedaśrutiṃ nāma śiva|vāri|vahāṃ nadīm
uttīry' âbhimukhaḥ prāyād Agasty'|âdhyuṣitāṃ diśam.
Gatvā tu suciraṃ kālaṃ tataḥ śīta|jalāṃ nadīm
Gomatīṃ goyut'|ānūpām atarat sāgaraṃ|gamām.
43.10 Gomatīṃ c' âpy atikramya Rāghavaḥ śīghragair hayaiḥ
mayūra|haṃs'|âbhirutāṃ tatāra Syandikāṃ nadīm.
Sa mahīṃ manunā rājñā dattām Ikṣvākave purā
sphītāṃ rāṣṭr'|āvṛtāṃ Rāmo Vaidehīm anvadarśayat.
«Sūta ity» eva c' ābhāṣya sārathiṃ tam abhīkṣṇaśaḥ
haṃsa|matta|svaraḥ śrīmān uvāca puruṣa|ṛṣabhaḥ

Now, in what remained of the same night Rama, tiger among men, travelled a great distance, mindful of his father's command. As he travelled gracious night departed. He then worshipped the gracious morning twilight and afterward pushed on to the frontier of the realm. Drawn by his splendid horses, he proceeded swiftly—though it seemed so slow to him—observing the villages with their wide-spaced boundaries and the forests all in flower, hearing the cries of the people who made their homes in the villages: "A curse upon King Dasha·ratha for succumbing to the power of passion!" "Ah, Kaikéyi is a vicious and evil woman always doing evil, a heartless woman who has gone beyond all limits. Today she has done a heartless deed in exiling the prince to a life in the forest, so righteous a prince, so wise, compassionate and steadfast." 43.1 43.5

Such were the words of the people who made their homes in the villages, and the mighty lord of Kósala heard them as he passed beyond the land of Kósala. He then crossed the Veda·shruti, a river running with gracious water, and continued on toward the region where Agástya lived. He travelled a long while and then crossed the Gómati, a chilly river flowing to the sea, its shores teeming with cows. After fording the Gómati on his swift horses Rághava crossed the Syándika River, where the cries of geese and peacocks resounded. Rama pointed out to Vaidéhi the land King Manu long ago bestowed upon Ikshváku, a rich land encircled by vassal kingdoms. And often the majestic bull among men would address his chariot driver in a voice like the call of the wild goose, saying, "When shall I come back, charioteer, and again go hunting in the flowering forest beside 43.10

«Kad" âhaṃ punar āgamya Sarayvāḥ puṣpite vane
mṛgayāṃ paryāṭaṣyāmi mātrā pitrā ca saṃgataḥ?
Atyartham abhikāṅkṣāmi mṛgayāṃ Sarayū|vane
ratir hy eṣ" âtulā loke rāja|ṛṣi|gaṇa|saṃmatā.»
43.15 Sa tam adhvānam Aikṣvākaḥ sūtaṃ madhurayā girā
taṃ tam artham abhipretya yayau vākyam udīrayan.

44.1 Viśālān Kosalān ramyān yātvā Lakṣmaṇa|pūrvajaḥ
āsasāda mahā|bāhuḥ Śṛṅgaverapuraṃ prati.
Tatra tri|pathagāṃ divyāṃ śiva|toyām a|śaivalām
dadarśa Rāghavo gaṅgāṃ puṇyām ṛṣi|nisevitām.
Haṃsa|sārasa|saṃghuṣṭāṃ cakravāk'|ôpakūjitām
śiṃśumaraiś ca nakraiś ca bhujaṃgaiś ca niṣevitām.
Tām ūrmi|kalil'|āvartām anvavekṣya mahā|rathaḥ
Sumantram abravīt: «sūtam ih' âiv' âdya vasāmahe.
44.5 Avidūrād ayaṃ nadyā bahu|puṣpa|pravālavān
sumahān iṅgudī|vṛkṣo vasāmo 'tr' âiva sārathe.»
Lakṣmaṇaś ca Sumantraś ca «bāḍham ity» eva Rāghavam
uktvā tam iṅgudī|vṛkṣaṃ tad" ôpayayatur hayaiḥ.
Rāmo 'bhiyāya taṃ ramyaṃ vṛkṣam Ikṣvāku|nandanaḥ
rathād avātarat tasmāt sa|bhāryaḥ saha|Lakṣmaṇaḥ.
Sumantro 'py avatīry' âiva mocayitvā hay'|ôttamān
vṛkṣa|mūla|gataṃ Rāmam upatasthe kṛt'|âñjaliḥ.

the Sárayu, reunited with my mother and father? I so long to hunt in the forest beside the Sárayu. That is a pleasure without equal in the world, one the hosts of royal seers have always prized." Of these and other matters Aikshváka spoke with the charioteer in his sweet voice as he continued on his way. 43.15

After passing through the broad and lovely land of Kósala, Lákshmana's great-armed eldest brother reached the outskirts of Shringa·vera·pura. There Rághava saw the Ganges, the heavenly river that goes by three paths, its gracious water unclogged by weeds; a holy river frequented by seers, ringing with the cries of geese and cranes and the calls of sheldrakes, swarming with dolphins, crocodiles and snakes. As the great chariot-fighter gazed over its wave-capped eddies, he said to the charioteer Sumántra, "We shall spend the night here. There, not far from the river, is a towering almond tree with luxuriant flowers and shoots. Charioteer, we shall spend the night there." "As you wish," replied Lákshmana and Sumántra, and the two then turned the horses toward the almond tree. On reaching the lovely tree Rama, the delight of the Ikshvákus, alighted from the chariot with his wife and Lákshmana. Sumántra alighted as well, and after unhitching the splendid horses he cupped his hands in reverence and stood in attendance on Rama at the foot of the tree. 44.1 44.5

Tatra rājā Guho nāma Rāmasy' ātma|samaḥ sakhā
Niṣāda|jātyo balavān sthapatiś c' êti viśrutaḥ.
Sa śrutvā puruṣa|vyāghraṃ Rāmaṃ viṣayam āgatam
vṛddhaiḥ parivṛto 'mātyair jñātibhiś c' âpy upāgataḥ.
Tato Niṣād'|âdhipatiṃ dṛṣṭvā dūrād avasthitam
saha Saumitriṇā Rāmaḥ samāgacchad Guhena saḥ.

Tam ārtaḥ saṃpariṣvajya Guho Rāghavam abravīt:
«yath" Âyodhyā tath" êdaṃ te Rāma kiṃ karavāṇi te?»
Tato guṇavad annādyam upādāya pṛthag|vidham
arghyaṃ c' ôpānayat kṣipraṃ vākyaṃ c' êdam uvāca ha:
«Svāgataṃ te mahā|bāho tav' êyam akhilā mahī
vayaṃ preṣyā bhavān bhartā sādhu rājyaṃ praśādhi naḥ.
Bhakṣyaṃ bhojyaṃ ca peyaṃ ca lehyaṃ c' êdam upasthitam
śayanāni ca mukhyāni vājināṃ khādanaṃ ca te.»

Guham eva bruvāṇaṃ taṃ Rāghavaḥ pratyuvāca ha:
«arcitāś c' âiva hṛṣṭāś ca bhavatā sarvathā vayam,
Padbhyām abhigamāc c' âiva sneha|saṃdarśanena ca»
bhujābhyāṃ sādhu|vṛttābhyāṃ pīḍayan vākyam abravīt:
«Diṣṭyā tvāṃ Guha paśyāmi arogaṃ saha bāndhavaiḥ
api te kūśalaṃ rāṣṭre mitreṣu ca dhaneṣu ca.
Yat tv idaṃ bhavatā kiṃ cit prītyā samupakalpitam
sarvaṃ tad anujānāmi na hi varte pratigrahe.
Kuśa|cīr'|âjina|dharaṃ phala|mūl'|âśanaṃ ca mām
viddhi praṇihitaṃ dharme tāpasaṃ vana|gocaram.
Aśvānāṃ khādanen' âham arthī n' ânyena kena cit

Now, the king of the region was named Guha, a friend of Rama and precious to him as life. He was of the Nisháda tribe, a powerful man and famed as their chief. He had heard that Rama, tiger among men, had come into his realm, and, accompanied by his aged ministers and kinsmen, he approached him. Seeing that Guha, overlord of the Nisháda, was waiting at a distance, Rama went out with Saumítri to meet him.

Guha embraced Rághava in anguish, saying: "This land, no less than Ayódhya, belongs to you. What may I do for you, Rama?" Then at once he had the welcome offering brought along with an assortment of choice foods and drinks, and he said: "I bid you welcome, great-armed prince. This entire land belongs to you. We are servants, you the master. Come, our kingdom is yours to rule. There is food at hand, solid, soft and liquid, and sweet things to lick; comfortable beds as well, and fodder for your horses."

So Guha spoke, and Rághava replied, "You honor and delight us in every way by your coming here on foot and your display of affection." He clasped him tight in his well-shaped arms and added, "How fortunate to see you, Guha, you and your kinsmen, in good health. All is well with you, I hope, with your kingdom, your treasury and your allies. I must, however, refuse everything you have so kindly made ready, for I am not in a position to accept. You must know that I am now an ascetic, whose home is in the forest, whose sole aim is to follow the ways of righteousness, who must dress in *kusha* grass, bark and hides, and live on fruit and roots. It is only fodder for the horses I need, nothing more. My honored friend will do me great homage with that alone.

etāvat" âtra|bhavatā bhaviṣyāmi supūjitaḥ.
Ete hi dayitā rājñaḥ pitur Daśarathasya me
etaiḥ suvihitair aśvair bhaviṣyāmy aham arcitaḥ.»
Aśvānāṃ pratipānaṃ ca khādanaṃ c' âiva so 'nvaśāt
Guhas tatr' âiva puruṣāṃs tvaritaṃ «dīyatām iti.»
Tataś cīr'|ôttar'|āsaṅgaḥ saṃdhyām anvāsya paścimām
jalam ev' ādade bhojyaṃ Lakṣmaṇen' āhṛtaṃ svayam
44.25 Tasya bhūmau śayānasya pādau prakṣālya Lakṣmaṇaḥ
sa|bhāryasya tato 'bhyetya tasthau vṛkṣam upāśritaḥ
Guho 'pi saha sūtena Saumitrim anubhāṣayan
anvajāgrat tato Rāmam apramatto dhanurdharaḥ
Tathā śayānasya tato 'sya dhīmato
yaśasvino Dāśarather mah"|ātmanaḥ
adṛṣṭa|duḥkhasya sukh'|ôcitasya sā
tadā vyatīyāya cireṇa śarvarī.

45.1 TAṂ JĀGRATAM ADAMBHENA bhrātur arthāya Lakṣmaṇam
Guhaḥ saṃtāpa|saṃtapto Rāghavaṃ vākyam abravīt:
«Iyaṃ tāta sukhā śayyā tvad|artham upakalpitā
pratyāśvasihi sādhv asyāṃ rāja|putra yathā|sukham.
Ucito 'yaṃ janaḥ sarvaḥ kleśānāṃ tvaṃ sukh'|ôcitaḥ
gupty|arthaṃ jāgariṣyāmaḥ Kākutsthasya vayaṃ niśām.
Na hi Rāmāt priyataro mam' âsti bhuvi kaś cana
bravīmy etad ahaṃ satyaṃ satyen'|âiva ca te śape.
45.5 Asya prasādād āśaṃse loke 'smin sumahad yaśaḥ
dharm'|âvāptiṃ ca vipulām arth'|âvāptiṃ ca kevalām.
So 'haṃ priya|sakhaṃ Rāmaṃ śayānaṃ saha Sītayā
rakṣiṣyāmi dhanuṣ|pāṇiḥ sarvato jñātibhiḥ saha.

For these horses are cherished by my father, King Dasha·ratha, and it will be hospitality enough for me if they are well cared for." Guha then straightway ordered water and fodder for the horses. "Fetch it at once," he told his men.

Wearing an upper garment of bark cloth, Rama then performed the twilight worship and took as his only refreshment the water Lákshmana brought himself. Afterward, as 44.25
Rama lay upon the ground, Lákshmana washed his feet and his wife's, and then withdrew, taking up a position beside the tree. Saumítri was engaged in conversation by the charioteer and Guha, who also kept vigilant watch over Rama, his bow at the ready. And so the great prince, a man who had never before known pain, but only pleasure, the wise and glorious Dasha·rathi lay there as the night dragged slowly by.

As Lákshmana Rághava stood there wide awake on his 45.1
brother's behalf, Guha burned with a burning sorrow and said to him: "Here is a comfortable bed, my friend, made ready on your behalf. Come, prince, rest in comfort upon it. My people are all used to hardship; you are used to comfort. We will stay awake tonight to watch over Kakútstha. There is no one on earth dearer to me than Rama. I am telling the truth, and by my truth I swear it to you. Whatever 45.5
hope I may have in this world for great glory, for the full acquisition of righteousness, or of simple wealth, I have by reason of his grace. And I for my part, bow in hand and in the company of my kinsmen, will protect my dear friend Rama, come what may, as he lies asleep with Sita. I have wandered the forest all my life and nothing happens here

Na hi me 'viditaṃ kiṃ cid vane 'smiṃś carataḥ sadā
catur|aṅgaṃ hy api balaṃ sumahat prasahemahi.»

Lakṣmaṇas taṃ tad" ôvāca: «rakṣyamāṇās tvay" ânagha
n' âtra bhītā vayaṃ sarve dharmam ev' ânupaśyatā.
Kathaṃ Dāśarathau bhūmau śayāne saha Sītayā
śakyā nidrā mayā labdhuṃ jīvitaṃ vā sukhāni vā?
45.10 Yo na dev'|âsuraiḥ sarvaiḥ śakyaḥ prasahituṃ yudhi
taṃ paśya guha|saṃviṣṭaṃ tṛṇeṣu saha Sītayā.
Yo mantra|tapasā labdho vividhaiś ca pariśramaiḥ
eko Daśarathasy' âiṣa putraḥ sadṛśa|lakṣaṇaḥ.
Asmin pravrajito rājā na ciraṃ vartayiṣyati
vidhavā medinī nūnaṃ kṣipram eva bhaviṣyati.
Vinadya sumahā|nādaṃ śrameṇ' ôparatāḥ striyaḥ
nirghoṣ'|ôparataṃ tāta manye rāja|niveśanam.

Kausalyā c' âiva rājā ca tath" âiva jananī mama
n' āśaṃse yadi jīvanti sarve te śarvarīm imām.
45.15 Jīved api hi me mātā Śatrughnasy' ânvavekṣayā
tad duḥkhaṃ yat tu Kausalyā vīrasūr vinaśiṣyati.
Anurakta|jan'|ākīrṇā sukhā loka|priy'|āvahā
rāja|vyasana|saṃsṛṣṭā sā purī vinaśiṣyati.
Atikrāntam atikrāntam an|avāpya mano|ratham
rājye Rāmam anikṣipya pitā me vinaśiṣyati.
Siddh'|ârthāḥ pitaraṃ vṛttaṃ tasmin kāle hy upasthite
preta|kāryeṣu sarveṣu saṃskariṣyanti bhūmipam.
Ramya|catvara|saṃsthānāṃ suvibhakta|mahā|pathām
harmya|prāsāda|saṃpannāṃ gaṇikā|vara|śobhitām;

without my knowing of it. Moreover, we are prepared to withstand even a vast army of four divisions."

Lákshmana replied to him, "With you protecting us here, blameless Guha, with righteousness alone in view, we could have nothing to fear. But how, while Dasha·rathi is lying on the ground with Sita, could I find sleep—or any happiness in life? Look at him, Guha, reposing with Sita on the grass, 45.10
a man whom all the gods and *ásuras* could not withstand in battle. This is the only one of Dasha·ratha's sons to resemble him in every trait—a son obtained by means of austerities, Vedic recitations, and all kinds of heavy labors. With him in banishment the king will not long remain alive. The earth will surely soon be widowed. The women must have cried out their last great cries and ceased in exhaustion. The din, I expect, has ceased in the king's palace, my friend.

I have little hope that Kausálya, the king or my mother will live out this night. Even if my mother should live 45.15
through it to look after Shatrúghna, Kausálya's sorrow is such that she, who bore this one heroic son, will perish. Caught up in the king's calamity the city, which once brought gladness with its pleasant aspect, will perish with all its loyal people. And my father, who never got the wish that just eluded him, who never installed Rama in the kingship, will perish, too. And when that moment comes, when father passes away and they purify the lord of the land with all the rites for the dead, they will have attained their object. Then they will stroll at their ease through my father's capital, through its lovely squares and well-ordered thoroughfares;

45.20 Rath'|âśva|gaja|saṃbādhāṃ tūrya|nāda|vināditām
sarva|kalyāṇa|saṃpūrṇāṃ hṛṣṭa|puṣṭa|jan'|ākulām;
Ārām'|ôdyāna|saṃpannāṃ samāj'|ôtsava|śālinīm
sukhitā vicariṣyanti rājadhānīṃ pitur mama.
Api satya|pratijñena sārdhaṃ kuśalinā vayam
nivṛtte vana|vāse 'sminn Ayodhyāṃ praviśemahi.»
Paridevayamānasya duḥkh'|ārtasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
tiṣṭhato rāja|putrasya śarvarī s" âtyavartata.
Tathā hi satyaṃ bruvati prajā|hite
nar'|êndra|putre guru|sauhṛdād Guhaḥ
mumoca bāṣpaṃ vyasan'|âbhipīḍito
jvar'|āturo nāga iva vyath"|āturaḥ.

46.1 Prabhātāyāṃ tu śarvaryāṃ pṛthu|vakṣā mahā|yaśāḥ
uvāca Rāmaḥ Saumitriṃ Lakṣmaṇaṃ śubha|lakṣaṇam:
«Bhāskar'|ôdaya|kālo 'yaṃ gatā bhagavatī niśā
asau sukṛṣṇo vihagaḥ kokilas tāta kūjati.
Barhiṇānāṃ ca nirghoṣaḥ śrūyate nadatāṃ vane
tarāma Jāhnavīṃ saumya śīghragāṃ sāgaraṃ|gamām.»
Vijñāya Rāmasya vacaḥ Saumitrir mitra|nandanaḥ
Guham āmantrya sūtaṃ ca so 'tiṣṭhad bhrātur agrataḥ.
46.5 Tataḥ kalāpān saṃnahya khaḍgau baddhvā ca dhanvinau
jagmatur yena tau Gaṅgā Sītayā saha Rāghavau.
Rāmam eva tu dharmajñam upagamya vinītavat
«kim ahaṃ karavāṇ' îti» sūtaḥ prāñjalir abravīt.
«Nivartasv' êty» uvāc' âinam «etāvad hi kṛtaṃ mama
yānaṃ vihāya padbhyāṃ tu gamiṣyāmo mahā|vanam.»

with all its mansions and palaces, with the fairest courtesans to lend it beauty, with its teeming chariots, horses, 45.20
elephants; resounding with the sound of pipes, stocked with every luxury, thronging with delighted and prosperous people, dotted with orchards and gardens, a place of crowded fairs and festivals. If only we might return to Ayódhya when our stay in the forest is over to find him well and his promise fulfilled."

So the night passed with the great prince standing there mourning, racked with sorrow. And when the good prince had spoken these forthright words, Guha wept in deep compassion, crushed by the calamity and tormented by heartache, like an elephant tormented by a raging fever.

WHEN NIGHT HAD brightened into dawn, broad-chested 46.1
glorious Rama spoke to good Lákshmana Saumítri: "It is the hour of sunrise, blessed night has gone. Over there, dear brother, the jet-black bird, the cuckoo, is calling. You can hear the sound of peacocks crying in the forest. Let us cross the Jáhnavi, dear Lákshmana, the swift river that flows to the sea." Heeding Rama's words, Saumítri, the delight of his friends, bade farewell to Guha and the charioteer and stood before his brother. Then, after strapping on their quivers 46.5
and buckling on their swords, the two Rághavas took up their bows and went with Sita down to the Ganges.

Now the charioteer deferentially approached righteous Rama and, cupping his hands in reverence, he asked, "What then am I to do?" "Go back," Rama answered. "You have done enough for me. We shall relinquish the coach and

Ātmānaṃ tv abhyanujñātam avekṣy' ārtaḥ sa sārathiḥ
Sumantraḥ puruṣa|vyāghram Aikṣvākam idam abravīt:
«N' âtikrāntam idaṃ loke puruṣeṇeha kena cit
tava sa|bhrātṛ|bhāryasya vāsaḥ prākṛtavad vane.
Na manye brahmacarye 'sti svadhīte vā phal'|ôdayaḥ
mārdav'|ārjavayor v" âpi tvāṃ ced vyasanam āgatam.
Saha Rāghava Vaidehyā bhrātrā c' âiva vane vasan
tvaṃ gatiṃ prāpsyase vīra trīśl lokāṃs tu jayann iva.
Vayaṃ khalu hatā Rāma ye tay" âpy upavañcitāḥ
Kaikeyyā vaśam eṣyāmaḥ pāpāyā duḥkha|bhāginaḥ.»
Iti bruvann ātma samaṃ Sumantraḥ sārathis tadā
dṛṣṭvā dura|gataṃ Rāmaṃ duḥkh'|ārto rurude ciram.

Tatas tu vigate bāṣpe sūtaṃ spṛṣṭ'|ôdakaṃ śucim
Rāmas tu madhuraṃ vākyaṃ punaḥ punar uvāca tam:
«Ikṣvākūṇāṃ tvayā tulyaṃ suhṛdaṃ n' ôpalakṣaye
yathā Daśaratho rājā māṃ na śocet tathā kuru.
Śok'|ôpahata cetāś ca vṛddhaś ca jagatī|patiḥ
kāma|bhār'|âvasannaś ca tasmād etad bravīmi te.
Yad yad ājñāpayet kiṃ cit sa mah"|ātmā mahī|patiḥ
Kaikeyyāḥ priya|kām'|ârthaṃ kāryaṃ tad avikāṅkṣayā.
Etad|arthaṃ hi rājyāni praśāsati nar'|ēśvarāḥ
yad eṣāṃ sarva|kṛtyeṣu mano na pratihanyate.
Tad yathā sa mahā|rājo n' âlīkam adhigacchati

proceed to the great forest on foot." Finding himself dismissed, the charioteer Sumántra was anguished and replied to Aikshváka, tiger among men: "There is no person in the world who would ever have expected this, your having to live in the forest with your brother and wife, like some common man. I guess there is no reward for chastity or Vedic 46.10
study, for lenience, or uprightness, if such a calamity has befallen you. Living in the forest with Vaidéhi and your brother, mighty Rághava, you will achieve as high an end as if you had conquered the three worlds. But surely we are lost, Rama, even you have misled us. For we shall come under the power of evil Kaikéyi, and only sorrow can be our lot." So the charioteer Sumántra spoke to the prince who was precious to him as life. And as he looked at Rama, so far from home, he was racked with sorrow, and for a long while he wept.

His tears stopping, the charioteer sipped water, and when he was thus purified, Rama addressed him gently but insistently:

"I do not know of any friend the Ikshvákus have to equal 46.15
you. It is you who must take care that King Dasha·ratha not grieve for me. The lord of the world is aged, his heart has been crushed by grief and a heavy burden of desire weighs him down. That is why I tell you this: Whatever orders the great lord of the land may give in his desire to please Kaikéyi must be obeyed without demur. For it is to this end lords of men take up the rule of kingdoms, that their will never be opposed in anything they require. So you must take care, Sumántra, that the great king's displeasure is not

na ca tāmyati duḥkhena Sumantra kuru tat tathā.
Adṛṣṭa|duḥkhaṃ rājānaṃ vṛddham āryaṃ jit'|êndriyam
brūyās tvam abhivādy' âiva mama hetor idaṃ vacaḥ:
‹n' âiv' âham anuśocāmi Lakṣmaṇo na ca Maithilī
Ayodhyāyāś cyutāś c' êti vane vatsyāmah' êti vā.
Catur|daśasu varṣeṣu nivṛtteṣu punaḥ punaḥ
Lakṣmaṇaṃ māṃ ca Sītāṃ ca drakṣyasi kṣipram āgatān.›

Evam uktvā tu rājānaṃ mātaraṃ ca Sumantra me
anyāś ca devīḥ sahitāḥ Kaikeyīṃ ca punaḥ punaḥ.
Ārogyaṃ brūhi Kausalyām atha pād'|âbhivandanam
Sītāyā mama c' āryasya vacanāl Lakṣmaṇasya ca.
Brūyāś ca hi mahā|rājaṃ: ‹Bharataṃ kṣipram ānaya
āgataś c' âpi Bharataḥ sthāpyo nṛpa|mate pade.
Bharataṃ ca pariṣvajya yauvarājye 'bhiṣicya ca
asmat|saṃtāpajaṃ duḥkhaṃ na tvām abhibhaviṣyati.›
Bharataś c' âpi vaktavyo: ‹yathā rājani vartase
tathā mātṛṣu vartethāḥ sarvāsv ev' âviśeṣataḥ.
Yathā ca tava Kaikeyī Sumitrā c' âviśeṣataḥ
tath" âiva devī Kausalyā mama mātā viśeṣataḥ.›»

Nivartyamāno Rāmeṇa Sumantraḥ śoka|karśitaḥ
tat sarvaṃ vacanaṃ śrutvā snehāt Kākutstham abravīt:
«Yad ahaṃ n' ôpacāreṇa brūyāṃ snehād aviklavaḥ
bhaktimān iti tat tāvad vākyaṃ tvaṃ kṣantum arhasi.
Kathaṃ hi tvad|vihīno 'haṃ pratiyāsyāmi tāṃ purīm
tava tāta viyogena putra|śok'|ākulām iva?
Sa|Rāmam api tāvan me rathaṃ dṛṣṭvā tathā janaḥ

provoked and that he does not languish under sorrow. The king has never known sorrow before; he is aged, noble and self-controlled. First do obeisance to him and then address him in my name as follows: 'I do not grieve at all, nor does Lákshmana or Máithili, that we have been expelled from Ayódhya or that we must live in the forest. As soon as the fourteen years are over we will come home, and you shall look upon each of us again, Sita, Lákshmana and me.'

After speaking to the king, Sumántra, ask my mother, ask Kaikéyi and all the other queens after their health, each one in turn. And tell Kausálya for me that Sita, Lákshmana and I, her noble son, send her respectful greetings. Then you must tell the great king, 'Send for Bhárata at once. As soon as Bhárata returns he must be installed in office with the approval of the kings. Once you have taken Bhárata in your arms and consecrated him as prince regent, sorrow for our suffering will no longer oppress you.' And tell this to Bhárata: 'You must treat your mothers, all of them, without distinction, the same way you treat the king. Just as you draw no distinction between Kaikéyi and Sumítra, so draw none at all with regard to Queen Kausálya, my mother.'"

Though stricken with grief at being sent back by Rama, Sumántra heard everything he said and then affectionately replied to Kakútstha: "If, emboldened by my affection, I do not speak as a subordinate should, attribute it to my deep devotion and forgive me what I say. How shall I return without you, dear Rama, to a city that, at parting from you, went mad with such grief as one feels for a son? Think how the people were, merely seeing Rama aboard my chariot. When the city sees my chariot with Rama gone, it will

vinā Rāmaṃ rathaṃ dṛṣṭvā vidīryet' âpi sā purī.
Dainyaṃ hi nagarī gacched dṛṣṭvā śūnyam imaṃ ratham
sūt'|âvaśeṣaṃ svaṃ sainyaṃ hata|vīram iv' āhave.
Dūre 'pi nivasantaṃ tvāṃ mānasen' âgrataḥ sthitam
cintayantyo 'dya nūnaṃ tvāṃ nirāhārāḥ kṛtāḥ prajāḥ.
46.35 Ārta|nādo hi yaḥ paurair muktas tad|vipravāsane
rathasthaṃ māṃ niśāmy' âiva kuryuḥ śata|guṇaṃ tataḥ.

Ahaṃ kiṃ c' âpi vakṣyāmi devīṃ? ‹tava suto mayā
nīto 'sau mātula|kulaṃ saṃtāpaṃ mā kṛthā iti»?
Asatyam api n' âiv' âhaṃ brūyāṃ vacanam īdṛśam?
katham apriyam ev' âhaṃ brūyāṃ satyam idaṃ vacaḥ?
Mama tāvan niyogasthās tvad|bandhu|jana|vāhinaḥ
kathaṃ rathaṃ tvayā hīnaṃ pravakṣyanti hay'|ôttamāḥ?
Yadi me yācamānasya tyāgam eva kariṣyasi
sa|ratho 'gniṃ pravekṣyāmi tyakta|mātra iha tvayā.
46.40 Bhaviṣyanti vane yāni tapo|vighna|karāṇi te
rathena pratibādhiṣye tāni sattvāni Rāghava.
Tat kṛtena mayā prāptaṃ ratha|caryā kṛtaṃ sukham
āśaṃse tvat|kṛten' âhaṃ vana|vāsa|kṛtaṃ sukham.
‹prasīd'› êcchāmi te 'raṇye bhavituṃ pratyanantaraḥ
prīty" âbhihitam icchāmi bhava me patyanantaraḥ.
Tava śuśrūṣaṇaṃ mūrdhnā kariṣyāmi vane vasan
Ayodhyāṃ deva|lokaṃ vā sarvathā prajahāmy aham.

fall to pieces. The city will be desolated when it sees the chariot empty. It would be as if, out of its whole army, only a charioteer survived, while all its brave warriors were slain in battle. Just now, while you still stood before them, the people felt sick at heart just to contemplate you, in their mind's eye, living far away. The cry of anguish the townsmen 46.35
raised at your banishment will be increased a hundredfold when they observe me all alone in the chariot.

And what am I to tell the queen? 'I have taken your son to your brother's family, so do not agonize'? Would I not have to say something like this, untruthful as it is? For how can I tell the truth when it is so painful? The splendid horses, it is true, respond to my command, but they are used to pulling you and your kinsmen. How will they pull the chariot when you are not in it? If, despite my pleading, you insist on leaving me, I will board the chariot and set it on fire the moment you do. There will be creatures in 46.40
the forest that will disturb your austerities, Rághava, and I could chase them off with the chariot. Thanks to you I have known the joy of tending your chariot, and I hope and pray that thanks to you I may know the joy of life in the forest. Oh, be gracious, I wish to wait upon you in the wilderness. My one wish is to have the pleasure of hearing you say, 'Wait upon me.' As I live in the forest I will obey you with bowed head. I am ready to give up everything, Ayódhya and the world of the gods itself.

Na hi śakyā praveṣṭuṃ sā may” Âyodhyā tvayā vinā
rājadhānī mah”|êndrasya yathā duṣkṛta|karmaṇā.
Ime c’ âpi hayā vīra yadi te vana|vāsinaḥ
paricaryāṃ kariṣyanti prāpsyanti paramāṃ gatim.
Vana|vāse kṣayaṃ prāpte mam’ âiṣa hi mano|rathaḥ
yad anena rathen’ âiva tvāṃ vaheyaṃ purīṃ punaḥ.
Catur|daśa hi varṣāṇi sahitasya tvayā vane
kṣaṇa|bhūtāni yāsyanti śataśas tu tato ’nyathā.
Bhṛtya|vatsala tiṣṭhantaṃ
bhartṛ|putra|gate pathi
bhaktaṃ bhṛtyaṃ sthitaṃ sthityāṃ
tvaṃ na māṃ hātum arhasi.»

Evaṃ bahuvidhaṃ dīnaṃ yācamānaṃ punaḥ punaḥ
Rāmo bhṛty’|ânukampī tu Sumantram idam abravīt:
«Jānāmi paramāṃ bhaktiṃ mayi te bhartṛ|vatsala
śṛṇu c’ âpi yad|arthaṃ tvāṃ preṣayāmi purīm itaḥ.
Nagarīṃ tvāṃ gataṃ dṛṣṭvā jananī me yavīyasī
Kaikeyī pratyayaṃ gacched iti Rāmo vanaṃ gataḥ.
Parituṣṭā hi sā devi vana|vāsaṃ gate mayi
rājānaṃ n’ âtiśaṅketa mithyā|vād’ īti dhārmikam.
Eṣa me prathamaḥ kalpo yad ambā me yavīyasī
Bharat’|ārakṣitaṃ sphītaṃ putra|rājyam avāpnuyāt.
Mama priy’|ârthaṃ rājñaś ca sa|rathas tvaṃ purīṃ vraja
saṃdiṣṭaś c’ âsi yān arthāṃs tāṃs tān brūyās tathā|tathā.»

I cannot in any case enter Ayódhya without you, any more than a man of evil conduct can gain entrance to the capital of great Indra. And the horses too, mighty Rama, 46.45
will attain their highest destiny if they can render you any service while you live in the forest. My fondest dream is that, when your stay in the forest has come to an end, I may convey you back to the city in this same chariot. In your company the fourteen years in the forest will pass like so many minutes, and without you they will seem like as many centuries. You have always cherished your servants, and I am a devoted servant only following the path his master's son has taken, only following the proper course. Please, do not leave me."

So the desolate Sumántra implored him, over and over, in every way he knew, and Rama, who always felt compassion for his servants, replied to him: "I know the profound 46.50
devotion you bear me, and how you cherish your master. But you must hear the reason I have for sending you back to the city. When my younger mother Kaikéyi sees that you have returned to the city, she will be convinced I have truly gone to the forest. And if the queen is satisfied that I have gone to live in the forest, she will no longer harbor suspicions that the righteous king has spoken falsely. This is my first consideration—that my younger mother should gain the kingdom for her son, and that it may thrive under Bhárata's protection. As a kindness to me and to the king, you must go back to the city with the chariot and faithfully deliver each and every message imparted to you."

Ity uktvā vacanaṃ sūtaṃ sāntvayitvā punaḥ punaḥ
Guhaṃ vacanam aklībaṃ Rāmo hetumad abravīt:
«jaṭāḥ kṛtvā gamiṣyāmi nyagrodha|kṣīram ānaya.»
Tat kṣīraṃ rāja|putrāya Guhaḥ kṣipram upāharat
Lakṣmaṇasy' ātmanaś c' âiva Rāmas ten' âkaroj jaṭāḥ.
Tau tadā cīra|vasanau jaṭā|maṇḍala|dhāriṇau
aśobhetām ṛṣisamau bhrātarau Rāma|Lakṣmaṇau.
Tato vaikhānasaṃ mārgam āsthitaḥ saha|Lakṣmaṇaḥ
vratam ādiṣṭavān Rāmaḥ sahāyaṃ Guham abravīt:
«Apramatto bale kośe durge jana|pade tathā
bhavethā Guha rājyaṃ hi durārakṣatamaṃ matam.»
Tatas taṃ samanujñāya Guham Ikṣvāku|nandanaḥ
jagāma tūrṇam avyagraḥ sabhāryaḥ sahaLakṣmaṇaḥ.

Sa tu dṛṣṭvā nadītīre nāvam Ikṣvāku|nandanaḥ
titīrṣuḥ śīghragāṃ gaṅgām idaṃ Lakṣmaṇam abravīt:
«Āroha tvaṃ nara vyāghra sthitāṃ nāvam imāṃ śanaiḥ
Sītāṃ c' āropayānvakṣaṃ parigṛhya manasvinīm.»
Sa bhrātuḥ śāsanaṃ śrutvā sarvam apratikūlayan
āropya maithilīṃ pūrvam ārurohātmavāṃs tataḥ.
Athāruroha tejasvī svayaṃ Lakṣmaṇapūrvajaḥ
tato Niṣād'|âdhipatir Guho jñātīn acodayat.
Anujñāya Sumantraṃ ca sabalaṃ c' âiva taṃ Guham
āsthāya nāvaṃ Rāmas tu codayām āsa nāvikān.
Tatas taiś coditā sā nauḥ karṇa|dhāra|samāhitā
śubha|sphya|veg'|âbhihatā śīghraṃ salilam atyagāt.

So Rama addressed the charioteer and comforted him at 46.55
length. Then in a manful and purposeful tone he addressed Guha: "I will mat my hair and go. Please fetch me some sap of the banyan tree." Guha at once brought the sap to the prince, and with it Rama matted his own and Lákshmana's hair. As they stood there dressed in bark cloth and bearing a crown of matted hair, the brothers Rama and Lákshmana resembled a pair of seers. Having entered with Lákshmana upon the way of forest hermits and adopted their vow, Rama turned one last time to his friend Guha: "Never neglect your army, Guha, your treasury, stronghold or populace. Nothing is deemed so hard to preserve as the position of a king." The delight of the Ikshvákus then dismissed Guha 46.60
and with determination went off swiftly with his wife and Lákshmana.

Now, at the riverbank the delight of the Ikshvákus saw a boat. Preparing to cross the swift-flowing Ganges, he said to Lákshmana: "Carefully board the boat that is standing ready, tiger among men. Then take hold of the spirited woman Sita and help her to board." Hearing his brother's command and in no way opposing it, the self-respecting prince first helped Máithili aboard and then boarded himself. Only then did Lákshmana's mighty eldest brother go on board, along with some of Guha's kinsmen, who went at the urging of the overlord of the Nishádas. After dismissing 46.65
Sumántra, Guha and his army, Rama took his seat in the boat and urged on the boatmen. They in turn urged on the boat, which, guided by the helmsman and propelled by the rush of their strong oars, moved swiftly out across the water.

Madhyaṃ tu samanuprāpya Bhāgīrathyās tv aninditā
Vaidehī prāñjalir bhūtvā tāṃ nadīm idam abravīt:
«Putro Daśarathasy' âyaṃ mahā|rājasya dhīmataḥ
nideśaṃ pālayatv enaṃ Ggaṅge tvad|abhirakṣitaḥ.
Catur|daśa hi varṣāṇi samagrāṇy uṣya kānane
bhrātrā saha mayā c' âiva punaḥ pratyāgamiṣyati.
46.70 Tatas tvāṃ devi subhage kṣemeṇa punar āgatā
yakṣye pramuditā Gaṅge sarva|kāma|samṛddhaye.
Tvaṃ hi tri|pathagā devi brahma|lokaṃ samīkṣase
bhāryā c' ôdadhi|rājasya loke 'smin saṃpradṛśyase.
Sā tvāṃ devi namasyāmi praśaṃsāmi ca śobhane
prāpta|rājye nara|vyāghra śivena punar āgate.
Gavāṃ śata|sahasrāṇi vastrāṇy annaṃ ca peśalam
brāhmaṇebhyaḥ pradāsyāmi tava priya|cikīrṣayā.»
Tathā saṃbhāṣamāṇā sā Sītā Gaṅgām aninditā
dakṣiṇā dakṣiṇaṃ tīraṃ kṣipram ev' âbhyupāgamat.
46.75 Tīraṃ tu samanuprāpya nāvaṃ hitvā nara|ṛṣabhaḥ
prātiṣṭhata saha bhrātrā Vaidehyā ca paraṃ|tapaḥ.
Ath' âbravīn mahā|bāhuḥ Sumitr"|ānanda|vardhanam:
«agrato gaccha saumitre Sītā tvām anugacchatu.
Pṛṣṭhato 'haṃ gamiṣyāmi tvāṃ ca Sītāṃ ca pālayan
adya duḥkhaṃ tu Vaidehī vana|vāsasya vetsyati.»
Gataṃ tu Gaṅgā|para|pāram āśu
Rāmaṃ Sumantraḥ pratataṃ nirīkṣya
adhva|prakarṣād vinivṛtta|dṛṣṭir
mumoca bāṣpaṃ vyathitas tapasvī.
Tau tatra hatvā caturo mahā|mṛgān

When they reached the middle of the Bhagi·rathi, faultless Vaidéhi cupped her hands in reverence and addressed the river: "This is the son of the great king, wise Dasha·ratha. Protect him, O Ganges, and let him carry out his instructions. After living in the woodlands a full fourteen years, may he return once again with his brother and me. And then, O beautiful goddess Ganges, when I have come 46.70
back safely, I will sacrifice to you in gladness for making all my wishes come true. O goddess, you are the river of three paths, you behold the world of Brahma and show yourself in our world as wife of the ocean king. I pay you homage, goddess, I sing your praises, lovely one. When the tiger among men has safely returned and secured the kingship, I will give the *brahman*s a hundred thousand cows, garments and exquisite food in hope of pleasing you."

Addressing the Ganges in this fashion, the faultless and courteous Sita soon reached the southern bank. Arriving at 46.75
the bank, the bull among men, slayer of foes, left the boat and prepared to set out with his brother and Vaidéhi.

The great-armed prince said to his brother, the delight of Sumítra, "Go in front, Saumítri, let Sita follow behind you. I shall go last, to protect you and Sita. But all the same, today Vaidéhi will come to know the pain of life in the forest." Now, while Rama was speeding to the further shore of the Ganges, Sumántra had watched continuously, but when the distance grew too great he turned his gaze away, and in shock and misery he wept. On the further bank the brothers killed four large animals—a boar, an antelope, a gazelle and a great black buck. They were famished and

varāha|mṛśyaṃ pṛṣataṃ mahā|rurum
ādāya medhyaṃ tvaritaṃ bubhukṣitau
vāsāya kāle yayatur vanaspatim.

47.1 Sa taṃ vṛkṣaṃ samāsādya saṃdhyām anvāsya paścimām
Rāmo ramayatāṃ śreṣṭha iti h' ôvāca Lakṣmaṇam.
«Ady' êyaṃ prathamā rātrir yātā jana|padād bahiḥ
yā Sumantreṇa rahitā tāṃ n' ôtkaṇṭhitum arhasi.
Jāgartavyam atandribhyām adya|prabhṛti rātriṣu
yoga|kṣemo hi Sītāyā vartate Lakṣmaṇ' āvayoḥ.
Rātriṃ kathaṃ cid ev' êmāṃ Saumitre vartayāmahe
upāvartāmahe bhūmāv āstīrya svayam ārjitaiḥ.»
47.5 Sa tu saṃviśya medinyāṃ mah"|ârha|śayan'|ôcitaḥ
imāḥ Saumitraye Rāmo vyājahāra kathāḥ śubhāḥ:
«Dhruvam adya mahā|rājo duḥkhaṃ svapiti Lakṣmaṇa
kṛta|kāmā tu Kaikeyī tuṣṭā bhavitum arhati.
Sā hi devī mahā|rājaṃ Kaikeyī rājya|kāraṇāt
api na cyāvayet prāṇān dṛṣṭvā Bharatam āgatam?
A|nāthaś c' âiva vṛddhaś ca mayā c' âiva vinākṛtaḥ
kiṃ kariṣyati kām'|ātmā Kaikeyyā vaśam āgataḥ?
Idaṃ vyasanam ālokya rājñaś ca mati|vibhramam
kāma ev' ârtha|dharmābhyāṃ garīyān iti me matiḥ.
47.10 Ko hy avidvān api pumān pramadāyāḥ kṛte tyajet
chand'|ânuvartinaṃ putraṃ tāto mām iva Lakṣmaṇa?

took meat hurriedly, and at sunset made for a tree beneath which they could spend the night.

On reaching the tree, Rama, the most pleasing of men, performed the evening twilight worship and then spoke to Lákshmana. "This is the first night we shall spend outside our country without Sumántra, but please, do not be sad about it. From now on we must remain constantly vigilant at night, Lákshmana, for the safety of Sita is in our hands. We shall have to spend this night as best we can, Saumítri. We shall have to settle down upon the ground itself strewn only with what we gather with our own hands." 47.1

Later, as Rama lay on the earth—a prince accustomed to a sumptuous bed—he began to talk with Saumítri, and these were the heartfelt words he spoke: "It must be the sleep of sorrow, Lákshmana, that the great king is sleeping tonight. Kaikéyi, however, must be content since her desires have been satisfied. But is it not possible that Queen Kaikéyi, when she sees Bhárata back home again, may try to take the great king's life, to make her son the king? And being old and defenseless and parted from me what will he do? Such is his desire for Kaikéyi that he is completely in her power. Reflecting on this calamity and how the king so utterly changed his mind, I have come to the conclusion that the urgings of desire far outweigh both statecraft and righteousness. For what man, even a fool, would forsake his own son—a son who ever bowed to his will—on account of a woman, as father forsook me, Lákshmana? 47.5 46.10

Sukhī bata sa|bhāryaś ca Bharataḥ Kekayī|sutaḥ
muditān Kosalān eko yo bhokṣyaty adhirājavat.
Sa hi sarvasya rājyasya mukham ekaṃ bhaviṣyati
tāte ca vayasā|tīte mayi c' âraṇyam āśrite.
Artha|dharmau parityajya yaḥ kāmam anuvartate
evam āpadyate kṣipraṃ rājā Daśaratho yathā.
Manye Daśarath'|ântāya mama pravrājanāya ca
Kaikeyī saumya saṃprāptā rājyāya Bharatasya ca.
47.15 Apīdānīṃ na Kaikeyī saubhāgya|mada|mohitā
Kausalyāṃ ca Sumitrāṃ ca saṃprabādheta mat|kṛte?
Mā sma mat|kāraṇād devī Sumitrā duḥkham āvaset
Ayodhyām ita eva tvaṃ kāle praviśa Lakṣmaṇa.

Aham eko gamiṣyāmi Sītayā saha Daṇḍakān
a|nāthāyā hi nāthas tvaṃ Kausalyāyā bhaviṣyasi.
Kṣudra|karmā hi Kaikeyī dveṣād anyāyyam ācaret
paridadyā hi dharmajñe Bharate mama mātaram.
Nūnaṃ jāty|antare kasmiṃḥ striyaḥ putrair viyojitāḥ
jananyā mama Saumitre tad apy etad upasthitam.
47.20 Mayā hi cira|puṣṭena duḥkha|saṃvardhitena ca
viprāyujyata Kausalyā phala|kāle dhig astu mām!
Mā sma sīmantinī kā cij janayet putram īdṛśam
Saumitre yo 'ham ambāyā dadmi śokam an|antakam.
Manye prīti|viśiṣṭā sā matto Lakṣmaṇa sārikā
yasyās tac chrūyate vākyaṃ: ‹śuka|pādam arer daśa.›

Kaikéyi's son Bhárata and his wife must indeed be joyful. Like an absolute monarch he will have the happy land of Kósala all to himself. Indeed, with father well on in years and me withdrawn to the wilderness, he will be the single head of the entire kingdom. Whoever forsakes righteousness and statecraft and follows the urgings of desire will soon come to grief, just like King Dasha·ratha. I am convinced, dear brother, that Kaikéyi came among us just to bring about Dasha·ratha's end, my banishment and Bhárata's accession to kingship. Is it not possible that even now, in the flush 47.15
of her good fortune, Kaikéyi may be persecuting Kausálya and Sumítra because of me? May Queen Sumítra never live in sorrow on my account. You must go straight back to Ayódhya tomorrow morning, Lákshmana.

I shall go on alone with Sita to the Dándakas, and you will be there to defend the defenseless Kausálya. For Kaikéyi can be spiteful, and in her hatred she may do something reckless. You must commit my mother to the care of Bhárata, who knows what is right. It must be that in some past life women were separated from their sons by my mother's doing, Saumítri, and so this has happened to her. For Kau- 47.20
sálya nurtured me long and with great difficulty raised me. And now at the very moment of her reward she has been separated from me—a curse on me! May no one who parts her hair ever bear a son like me, Saumítri, who have given my mother grief without end. Lákshmana, I think even her myna bird is a greater source of joy than I. The bird at least is there to cry out, 'Parrot, bite the enemy's foot.'

Śocantyāś c' âlpa|bhāgyāyā na kiṃ cid upakurvatā
purtreṇa kim? aputrāyā mayā kāryam ariṃ|dama.
Alpa|bhāgyā hi me mātā Kausalyā rahitā mayā
śete parama|duḥkh'|ārtā patitā śoka|sāgare.
47.25 Eko hy aham Ayodhyāṃ ca pṛthivīṃ c' âpi Lakṣmaṇa
tareyam iṣubhiḥ kruddho nanu vīryam akāraṇam.
A|dharma|bhaya|bhītaś ca para|lokasya c' ânagha
tena Lakṣmaṇa n' ây' âham ātmānam abhiṣecaye.»

Etad anyac ca karuṇaṃ vilapya vijane bahu
aśru|pūrṇa|mukho Rāmo niśi tūṣṇīm upāviśat.
Vilapy' ôparataṃ Rāmaṃ gat'|ârciṣam iv' ânalam
samudram iva nirvegam āśvāsayata Lakṣmaṇaḥ.
«Dhruvam adya purī Rāma Ayodhyā yudhināṃ vara
niṣprabhā tvayi niṣkrānte gata|candr" êva śarvarī.
47.30 N' âitad aupayikaṃ Rāma yad idaṃ paritapyase
viṣādayasi Sītāṃ ca māṃ c' âiva puruṣa|ṛṣabha.
Na ca Sītā tvayā hīnā na c' âham api Rāghava
muhūrtam api jīvāvo jalān matsyāv iv' ôddhṛtau.
Na hi tātaṃ na Śatrughnaṃ na Sumitrāṃ paraṃ|tapa
draṣṭum iccheyam ady' âhaṃ svargaṃ v" âpi tvayā vinā.»
Sa Lakṣmaṇasy' ôttama|puṣkalaṃ vaco
niśamya c' âivaṃ vana|vāsam ādarāt
samāḥ samastā vidadhe paraṃ|tapaḥ
prapadya dharmaṃ sucirāya Rāghavaḥ.

What good am I, tamer of foes, a son who does nothing to help her as she grieves in her misfortune? She might as well be childless. Bereft of me, my unfortunate mother Kausálya has been plunged into a sea of grief and lies there racked by bitter sorrow. In my rage, Lákshmana, all by myself I could 47.25
overpower Ayódhya or the whole world with my arrows. But truly force is useless. I fear the danger of unrighteousness, blameless Lákshmana, and I fear what other people might say. That is why I do not have myself consecrated at once."

Such and many other pitiful words of lamentation did Rama utter that night, in that desolate place. Then he fell silent, his face bathed in tears. When Rama had broken off his lamentation and lay like a damped-down fire or a sea becalmed, Lákshmana tried to comfort him. "It is true, Rama, best of warriors, that the city of Ayódhya will be gloomy tonight now that you have departed, like the night when the moon is gone. But it is to no avail, Rama, that 47.30
you torment yourself like this. You are only disheartening Sita, and me, too, bull among men. Neither Sita nor I could live an instant without you, Rághava. We would be like fish plucked out of the water. No, without you, slayer of enemies, I would not care to see Father now, not Shatrúghna, Sumítra or heaven itself." Rághava, slayer of enemies, listened to Lákshmana's earnest words and at last, recognizing it as the way of righteousness, he considerately gave him permission to live in the forest for all the years to come.

48.1 TE TU TASMIN mahā|vṛkṣa uṣitvā rajanīṃ śivām
vimale 'bhyudite sūrye tasmād deśāt pratasthire.
Yatra Bhāgīrathī Gaṅgā Yamunām abhivartate
jagmus taṃ deśam uddiśya vigāhya sumahad vanam.
Te bhūmim āgān vividhān deśāṃś c' âpi manoramān
adṛṣṭa|pūrvān paśyantas tatra tatra yaśasvinaḥ.
Yathā|kṣemeṇa gacchan sa paśyaṃś ca vividhān drumān
nivṛtta|mātre divase Rāmaḥ Saumitrim abravīt:

48.5 «Prayāgam abhitaḥ paśya Saumitre dhūmam unnatam
agner bhagavataḥ ketuṃ manye saṃnihito muniḥ.
Nūnaṃ prāptāḥ sma saṃbhedaṃ Gaṅgā|Yamunayor vayam
tathā hi śrūyate śambdo vāriṇā vāri|ghaṭṭitaḥ.
Dārūṇi paribhinnāni vanajair upajīvibhiḥ
Bharadvāj'|āśrame c' âite dṛśyante vividhā drumāḥ.»

Dhanvinau tau sukhaṃ gatvā lambamāne divākare
Gaṅgā|Yamunayoḥ saṃdhau prāpatur nilayaṃ muneḥ.
Rāmas tv āśramam āsādya trāsayan mṛga|pakṣiṇaḥ
gatvā muhūrtam adhvānaṃ Bharadvājam upāgamat.

48.10 Tatas tv āśramam āsādya muner darśana|kāṅkṣiṇau
Sītay" ânugatau vīrau dūrād ev' âvatasthatuḥ.
Hut'|âgni|hotraṃ dṛṣṭv" âiva mahā|bhāgaṃ kṛt'|âñjaliḥ
Rāmaḥ Saumitriṇā sārdhaṃ Sītayā c' âbhyavādayat.
Nyavedayata c' ātmānaṃ tasmai Lakṣmaṇa|pūrvajaḥ:
«putrau Daśarathasy' āvāṃ bhagavan Rāma|Lakṣmaṇau.
Bhāryā mam' êyaṃ Vaidehī kalyāṇī Janak'|ātmajā
māṃ c' ânuyātā vijanaṃ tapo|vanam aninditā.

After passing the gracious night under the great tree, 48.1
they set out from that place when the bright sun rose. Plunging into the great forest, they headed toward the place where Bhagi·rathi, the River Ganges, joins the Yámuna. And here and there, as the glorious party made their way, different types of landscape came into view, and charming places such as they had never seen before. Rama took the safest path, observing the different sorts of trees, and as day was drawing to a close he spoke to Saumítri:

"Look at the smoke, blessed Agni's banner, rising above 48.5
Prayága. I think the sage Bharad·vaja must live nearby, Saumítri. We must have reached the confluence of the Ganges and the Yámuna, for you can hear the sound of water dashing against water. Here are logs hewn by foresters, Bharad·vaja's dependents, and there you can see the different sorts of trees around his ashram."

The brothers went on at an easy pace bearing their bows, and as the sun was hanging low they came to the sage's abode at the confluence of the Ganges and the Yámuna. The deer and birds were frightened as Rama entered the ashram. Proceeding along the path, he soon came upon Bharad·vaja. With Sita following behind, the mighty brothers arrived at 48.10
the ashram and stood some distance off, eagerly awaiting the appearance of the sage. The illustrious sage soon completed the fire offering, and the moment Rama saw him he cupped his hands in reverence and with Saumítri and Sita did obeisance to him. Lákshmana's eldest brother then identified himself to him: "Holy one, we are two sons of Dasha·ratha, Rama and Lákshmana. And this is my wife Vaidéhi, the lovely daughter of Jánaka. The faultless woman is following

Pitrā pravrājyamānaṃ māṃ Saumitrir anujaḥ priyaḥ
ayam anvagamad bhrātā vanam eva dṛḍha|vrataḥ.
Pitrā niyuktā bhagavan praveṣyāmas tapovanam
dharmam ev' ācariṣyāmas tatra mūla|phal'|âśanāḥ.»

Tasya tad|vacanaṃ śrutvā rāja|putrasya dhīmataḥ
upānayata dharm'|ātmā gām arghyam udakaṃ tataḥ.
Mṛga|pakṣibhir āsīno munibhiś ca samantataḥ
Rāmam āgatam abhyarcya svāgaten' āha taṃ muniḥ.
Pratigṛhya ca tām arcām upaviṣṭaṃ sa|Rāghavam
Bharadvājo 'bravīd vākyaṃ dharma|yuktam idaṃ tadā:
«Cirasya khalu Kākutstha paśyāmi tvām ih' āgatam
śrutaṃ tava mayā c' êdaṃ vivāsanam akāraṇam.
Avakāśo vivikto 'yaṃ mahā|nadyoḥ samāgame
puṇyaś ca ramaṇīyaś ca vasatv iha bhagān sukham.»
Evam uktas tu vacanaṃ Bharadvājena Rāghavaḥ
pratyuvāca śubhaṃ vākyaṃ Rāmaḥ sarva|hite rataḥ:
«Bhagavann ita āsannaḥ paura|jānapado janaḥ
āgamiṣyati Vaidehīṃ māṃ c' âpi prekṣako janaḥ
anena kāraṇen' âham iha vāsaṃ na rocaye.
Ekānte paśya bhagavann āśrama|sthānam uttamam
ramate yatra Vaidehī sukh'|ârhā Janak'|ātmajā.»

Etac chrutvā śubhaṃ vākyaṃ Bharadvājo mahā|muniḥ
Rāghavasya tato vākyam artha grāhakam abravīt.
«Daśa|krośa itas tāta girir yasmin nivatsyasi
maharṣi|sevitaḥ puṇyaḥ sarvataḥ sukha|darśanaḥ.
Go|lāṅgūl'|ânucarito vānara|rkṣa|niṣevitaḥ

me to the desolate groves of asceticism. When my father banished me, Saumítri, my beloved younger brother here, faithfully accompanied me to the forest. On my father's or- 48.15
ders, holy one, we are to enter a grove of asceticism. There we will strictly follow the way of righteousness, living only on roots and fruit."

Upon hearing the words of the wise prince, the righteous sage presented him with a cow, the welcome offering and water. Then, sitting with deer and birds and sages all around him, the sage welcomed his visitor Rama and showed him hospitality. Rághava accepted his hospitality and took a seat, and then Bharad·vaja addressed him with these righteous words: "So at last I see you here, Kakútstha. I have heard about this, about your unwarranted exile. This is an iso- 48.20
lated spot, here at the confluence of the two great rivers. It is a sacred and delightful place, and you can live here comfortably." So Bharad·vaja spoke, and Rama Rághava made a forthright reply, for the welfare of all was his chief concern: "Holy one, not far from here live people of both town and province, and they will come to visit Vaidéhi and me. For this reason I cannot consent to our living here. Please think of some good site for an ashram, holy one, in a secluded place, one that will delight Jánaka's daughter Vaidéhi, who deserves every comfort."

The great sage Bharad·vaja, hearing Rághava's forthright words, answered him in a way that carried conviction. "Twenty miles from here, my son, is a mountain where 48.25
you may live. It is a sacred place where great seers make their home, with a pleasant prospect at every turn. Langurs range about it, and monkeys and apes live there. Its name is

Citrakūṭa iti khyāto Gandhamādana|saṃnibhaḥ.
Yāvatā Citrakūṭasya naraḥ śṛṅgāṇy avekṣate
kalyāṇāni samādhatte na pāpe kurute manaḥ.
Ṛṣayas tatra bahavo vihṛtya śaradāṃ śatam
tapasā divam ārūḍhāḥ kapāla|śirasā saha.
Praviviktam ahaṃ manye taṃ vāsaṃ bhavataḥ sukham
iha vā vana|vāsāya vasa Rāma mayā saha.»
48.30 Sa Rāmaṃ sarvakāmais taṃ Bharadvājaḥ priy'|âtithim
sa|bhāryaṃ saha ca bhrātrā pratijagrāha dharmavit.
Tasya Prayāge Rāmasya taṃ maha|ṛṣim upeyuṣaḥ
prapannā rajanī puṇyā citrāḥ kathayataḥ kathāḥ.
Prabhātāyāṃ rajanyāṃ tu Bharadvājam upāgamat
uvāca nara|śārdūlo muniṃ jvalita|tejasaṃ:
«Śarvarīṃ bhavanann adya satya|śīla tav' āśrame
uṣitāḥ sm' êha vasatim anujānātu no bhavān.»
Rātryāṃ tu tasyāṃ vyuṣṭāyāṃ Bharadvājo 'bravīd idam:
«madhu|mūla|phal'|ôpetaṃ Citrakūṭaṃ vraj' êti ha.
48.35 Tatra kuñjara|yūthāni mṛga|yūthāni c' âbhitaḥ
vicaranti van'|ânteṣu tāni drakṣyasi Rāghava.
Prahṛṣṭa|koyaṣṭika|kokila|svanair
vināditaṃ taṃ vasudhā|dharaṃ śivam
mṛgaiś ca mattair bahubhiś ca kuñjaraiḥ
suramyam āsādya samāvas' āśramam.»

49.1 Uṣitvā rajanīṃ tatra rāja|putrāv ariṃ|damau
maha|ṛṣim abhivād' âtha jagmatus taṃ giriṃ prati.
Prasthitāṃś c' âiva tān prekṣya pitā putrān iv' ânvagāt
tataḥ pracakrame vaktuṃ vacanaṃ sa mahā|muniḥ:

Chitra·kuta, and it looks like Mount Gandha·mádana. As long as a man beholds the peaks of Chitra·kuta, he meditates on blessed things and does not turn his mind to evil. Many seers have passed their hundred autumns there, and by means of their austerities have ascended to heaven with skull-white heads. It is an isolated place to live, one that I think will please you; or you may live here with me, Rama, for the duration of your stay in the forest." Thus Bharad· 48.30
vaja, wise in the ways of righteousness, received his dear guest Rama, his wife and brother, and fulfilled their every desire. And when holy night came on, Rama was still at Prayága in the company of the great seer, holding animated conversation.

But when night had brightened into dawn, the tiger among men came before Bharad·vaja, a sage of brilliant powers, and said: "Last night, holy one, we made our dwelling here, in your ashram. Now, truthful sage, give us leave to depart." Now that they had passed the night, Bharad·vaja replied, "Go, then, to Chitra·kuta, a place rich in honey, roots, and fruit. You will see herds of elephants there, Rá- 48.35
ghava, and herds of deer that range through the expanses of forest. Establish your ashram when you reach that gracious mountain—the call of lapwing and cuckoo echoes there, the deer in rut and the many elephants make it very pleasant."

After spending the night there, the princes, tamers of 49.1
foes, did obeisance to the great seer and went off toward the mountain. As the great sage observed them setting out, he followed behind as a father would follow his children, and he began to speak: "Now, when you reach the swift-flowing

«Ath' āsādya tu Kālindīṃ śīghra|srotasam āpagām
tatra yūyaṃ plavaṃ kṛtvā tarat' âṃśumatīṃ nadīm.
Tato nyagrodham āsādya mahāntaṃ harita|cchadam
vivṛddhaṃ bahubhir vṛkṣaiḥ śyāmaṃ siddh'|ôpasevitam.
Krośa|mātraṃ tato gatvā nīlaṃ drakṣyatha kānanam
palāśa|badarī|miśraṃ Rāma vaṃśaiś ca yāmunaiḥ.
Sa panthāś Citrakūṭasya gataḥ subahuśo mayā
ramyo mārdava|yuktaś ca vana|dāvair vivarjitaḥ
iti» panthānam āvedya maha|ṛṣiḥ sa nyavartata.

Upāvṛtte munau tasmin Rāmo Lakṣmaṇam abravīt:
«kṛta|puṇyāḥ sma Saumitre munir yan no 'nukampate.»
Iti tau puruṣa|vyāghrau mantrayitvā manasvinau
Sītām ev' âgrataḥ kṛtvā Kālindīṃ jagmatur nadīm.
Tau kāṣṭha|saṃghāṭam atho cakratuḥ sumahā|plavam
cakāra Lakṣmaṇaś chittvā Sītāyāḥ sukham ānasam.
Tatra śriyam iv' âcintyāṃ Rāmo Dāśarathiḥ priyām
īṣat|saṃlajjamānāṃ tām adhyāropayata plavam.
Tataḥ plaven' âṃśumatīṃ śīghragām ūrmi|mālinīm
tīrajair bahubhir vṛkṣaiḥ saṃterur Yamunāṃ nadīm.

Te tīrṇāḥ plavam utsṛjya prasthāya yamunā|vanāt
śyāmaṃ nyagrodham āseduḥ śītalaṃ harita|cchadam.
«Kausalyāṃ c' âiva paśyeyaṃ Sumitrāṃ ca yaśasvinīm
iti» Sīt" âñjaliṃ kṛtvā paryagachad vanaspatim.
Krośa|mātraṃ tato gatvā bhrātarau Rāma|Lakṣmaṇau
bahūn medhyān mṛgān hatvā ceratur Yamunā|vane.
Vihṛtya te barhiṇa|pūga|nādite

Kalíndi, the daughter of the sun, make a raft there and cross the river. There you will come upon a great banyan tree with lush green leaves, called Shyama. It has grown dense with its many trunks and is the haunt of perfected beings. Two miles 49.5
beyond it, Rama, you will see a dark thicket, a mixture of flame trees, jujubes and Yámuna bamboo. That is the way to Chitra·kuta. I have travelled it many times, for it is pleasant and easy, and quite safe from forest fires." After describing the way to them, the great seer turned back.

When the sage had gone, Rama said to Lákshmana, "How fortunate we are, Saumítri, that the sage has shown us such compassion." Conversing in this fashion, the brothers, tigers among men, proceeded in high spirits to the Kalíndi River with Sita before them. They lashed together logs to fashion a good-sized raft, and Lákshmana cut some wood to make a comfortable seat for Sita. Next, Rama Dasha·rathi helped 49.10
her board the raft, and as he did so she was half-embarrassed, his beloved wife, a woman as marvelous as the goddess Shri. Then on the raft they crossed the Yámuna, daughter of the sun, a swift-flowing, wave-wreathed river with trees growing thick along her banks.

Once across they abandoned the raft, and setting out from the Yámuna forest they reached Shyama, the cool, green-leafed banyan tree. "O that I may see Kausálya again, and glorious Sumítra." Such was the wish Sita made as she walked around the tree, hands cupped in reverence. Proceeding two miles further, the brothers Rama and Lákshmana killed many animals such as are pure to consume and ate them in a grove by the Yámuna. They passed the time pleas- 49.15
antly in the lovely grove resounding with flocks of peacocks

śubhe vane vāraṇa|vānar'|āyute
samaṃ nadī|vapram upetya saṃmataṃ
nivāsam ājagmur a|dīna|darśanaḥ.

50.1 ATHA RĀTRYĀṂ VYATĪTĀYĀM avasuptam anantaram
prabodhayām āsa śanair Lakṣmaṇaṃ Raghu|nandanaḥ.
«Saumitre śṛṇu vanyānāṃ valgu vyāharatāṃ svanam
saṃpratiṣṭhāmahe kālaḥ prasthānasya paraṃ|tapa.»
Sa suptaḥ samaye bhrātrā Lakṣmaṇaḥ pratibodhitaḥ
jahau nidrāṃ ca tandrīṃ ca prasaktaṃ ca pathi śramam.
Tata utthāya te sarve spṛṣṭvā nadyāḥ śivaṃ jalam
panthānam ṛṣiṇ" ôddiṣṭaṃ Citrakūṭasya taṃ yayuḥ.
50.5 Tataḥ saṃprasthitaḥ kāle Rāmaḥ Saumitriṇā saha
Sītāṃ kamala|patr'|âkṣīm idaṃ vacanam abravīt.
«Ādīptān iva Vaidehi sarvataḥ puṣpitān nagān
svaiḥ puṣpaiḥ kiṃ|śukān paśya mālinaḥ śiśir'|âtyaye.
Paśya bhallātakān phullān narair anupasevitān
phala|patrair avanatān nūnaṃ śakṣyāmi jīvitum.
Paśya droṇa|pramāṇāni lambamānāni Lakṣmaṇa
madhūni madhukārībhiḥ saṃbhṛtāni nage nage.
Eṣa krośati natyūhas taṃ śikhī pratikūjati
ramaṇīye van'|ôddeśe puṣpa|saṃstara|saṃkaṭe.
50.10 Mātaṃga|yūth'|ânusṛtaṃ pakṣi|saṃgh'|ânunāditam
Citrakūṭam imaṃ paśya pravṛddha|śikharaṃ girim.»

and teeming with elephants and monkeys. Then, no longer looking sad, they repaired to a spot where the riverbank was level and found a suitable place to pass theñight.

When night ended Lákshmana dozed off, but straight- 50.1
way the delight of the Raghus gently roused him. "Saumítri, listen to the sweet sounds the forest creatures are making. Let us be off, slayer of enemies, it is time for us to depart." Even though his brother had roused him the very moment he was dozing off, Lákshmana at once shook off his sleep and lassitude and the fatigue of constant travel. They all rose and sipped the gracious water of the river and then set out on the path to Chitra·kuta described by the seer.

As Rama set out in the early morning with Saumítri, 50.5
he began to speak to lotus-eyed Sita. "Look, Vaidéhi, the *kínshuka* trees are in full blossom now that winter is past. Garlanded with their red flowers they almost seem to be on fire. Look at the marking-nut trees in bloom, untended by man, how they are bent over with fruit and leaves. I know I shall be able to live. Look at the honeycombs, Lákshmana, amassed by honeybees on one tree after another. They hang down large as buckets. Here a moorhen is crying, and in answer to it a peacock calls through delightful stretches of forest richly carpeted with flowers. And look, there is Chi- 50.10
tra·kuta, the mountain over there with the towering peak, teeming with herds of elephants and echoing with flocks of birds."

Tatas tau pāda|cāreṇa gacchantau saha Sītayā
ramyam āsedatuḥ śailaṃ Citrakūṭaṃ manoramam.
Taṃ tu parvatam āsādya nānā|pakṣi|gaṇ'|āyutam
«ayaṃ vāso bhavet tāvad atra saumya ramemahi.
Lakṣmaṇ' ānaya dārūṇi dṛḍhāni ca varāṇi ca
kuruṣv' āvasathaṃ saumya vāse me 'bhirataṃ manaḥ.»
Tasya tad|vacanaṃ śrutvā Saumitrir vividhān drumān
ājahāra tataś cakre parṇa|śālām ariṃ|dama.
50.15 Śuśrūṣamāṇam ek'|âgram idaṃ vacanam abravīt:
«aiṇeyaṃ māṃsam āhṛtya śālāṃ yakṣyāmahe vayam.»
Sa Lakṣmaṇaḥ kṛṣṇa|mṛgaṃ hatvā medhyaṃ pratāpavān
atha cikṣepa Saumitriḥ samiddhe jātavedasi.
Taṃ tu pakvaṃ samājñāya niṣṭaptaṃ chinna|śoṇitam
Lakṣmaṇaḥ puruṣa|vyāghram atha Rāghavam abravīt:
«Ayaṃ kṛṣṇaḥ samāpt'|âṅgaḥ śṛtaḥ kṛṣṇa|mṛgo yathā
devatā deva|saṃkāśa yajasva kuśalo hy asi.»
Rāmaḥ snātvā tu niyato guṇavāñ japya|kovidaḥ
pāpa|saṃśamanaṃ Rāmaś cakāra balim uttamam.
50.20 Tāṃ vṛkṣa|parṇa|cchadanāṃ manojñāṃ
yathā|pradeśaṃ sukṛtāṃ nivātām
vāsāya sarve viviśuḥ sametāḥ
sabhāṃ yathā deva|gaṇāḥ Sudharmām.
Aneka|nānā|mṛga|pakṣi|saṃkule
vicitra|puṣpa|stabalair drumair yute
van'|ôttame vyāla|mṛg'|ânunādite

So the brothers and Sita proceeded on foot and reached the delightful mountain, charming Chitra·kuta. And on reaching the mountain, where birds of every description came flocking, he said, "This will be our dwelling for now. We shall enjoy ourselves here, dear brother. Fetch wood, dear Lákshmana, good, hard wood, and build a place to live, for my heart is set on living here." Hearing his words Saumítri, tamer of foes, went and brought different kinds of trees and built a leaf-hut.

Then Rama addressed him again, his single-mindedly 50.15
obedient brother: "Bring flesh of a black antelope, and we shall offer sacrifice to our hut." Powerful Lákshmana Saumítri killed a black deer, one pure enough for sacrifice, and then cast it into a well-kindled fire. When Lákshmana observed that it was cooked, well-broiled, the bleeding stanched, he said to Rághava, tiger among men: "The black deer has been roasted black, with all its limbs intact. You may now sacrifice to the gods, my godlike brother, for you are proficient."

Rama bathed and then, intently and with expertise, he intoned the prayers most skillfully and made a plentiful offering for averting evil. It was a charming leaf-thatched 50.20
hut, well built in a suitable spot protected from the wind, and they all entered it together to take up their dwelling, as the hosts of gods enter their assembly hall Sudhárma. It was a splendid forest, too, teeming with many kinds of birds and beasts, where trees grew dense with brilliant clusters of flowers, and the cries of wild animals echoed. And they enjoyed themselves in perfect happiness there—all the while holding their senses under control. Now that he had

tathā vijahruḥ susukhaṃ jit'|êndriyāḥ.
Suramyam āsādya tu Citrakūṭaṃ
nadīṃ ca tāṃ Mālyavatīṃ sutīrthām
nananda hṛṣṭo mṛga|pakṣi|juṣṭāṃ
jahau ca duḥkhaṃ pura|vipravāsāt.

arrived at pleasant Mount Chitra·kuta and the River Mályavati, with its gentle fords where beasts and birds would congregate, Rama felt a gladness and delight that made him forget the sorrow of being an exile from his city.

51–58
THE END OF DASHA·RATHA

51.1 KATHAYITVĀ SUDUḤKH'|ĀRTAḤ SUMANTREṆA ciraṃ saha
Rāme dakṣiṇa|kūlasthe jagāma sva|gṛhaṃ Guhaḥ.
Anujñātaḥ Sumantro 'tha yojayitvā hay'|ôttamān
Ayodhyām eva nagarīṃ prayayau gāḍha|durmanāḥ.
Sa vanāni sugandhīni saritaś ca sarāṃsi ca
paśyann atiyayau śīghraṃ grāmāṇi nagarāṇi ca.
Tataḥ sāyāhna|samaye tṛtīye 'hani sārathiḥ
Ayodhyāṃ samanuprāpya nirānandāṃ dadarśa ha.
51.5 Sa śūnyām iva niḥśabdāṃ dṛṣṭvā parama|durmanāḥ
Sumantraś cintayām āsa śoka|vega|samāhataḥ:
«Kaccin na sa|gajā s'|âśvā sa|janā sa|jan'|âdhipā
Rāma saṃtāpa|duḥkhena dagdhā śok'|âgninā purī?
iti» cintā|paraḥ sūtas tvaritaḥ praviveśa ha.
Sumantram abhiyāntaṃ taṃ śataśo 'tha sahasraśaḥ:
«kva Rāma iti» pṛcchantaḥ sūtam abhyadravan narāḥ.
Teṣāṃ śaśaṃsa: «Gaṅgāyām aham āpṛcchya Rāghavam
anujñāto nivṛtto 'smi dhārmikeṇa mah"|ātmanā.
Te tīrṇā iti» vijñāya bāṣpa|pūrṇa|mukhā janāḥ
«aho dhig iti» niḥśvasya «hā Rām' êti» ca cukruśuḥ.
51.10 Śuśrāva ca vacas teṣāṃ vṛndaṃ vṛndaṃ ca tiṣṭhatām:
«hatāḥ sma khalu ye n' êha paśyāma iti Rāghavam»
«Dāna|yajña|vivāheṣu samājeṣu mahatsu ca
na drakṣyāmaḥ punar jātu dhārmikaṃ Rāmam antarā»
«Kiṃ samarthaṃ janasy' âsya kiṃ priyaṃ kiṃ sukh'|āvaham
iti Rāmeṇa nagaraṃ pitṛvat paripālitam»

RACKED WITH BITTER sorrow, Guha had stood talking a long while with Sumántra until Rama landed on the southern shore, and then he returned home. Given leave to depart, Sumántra harnessed the splendid horses, and in profound dejection he proceeded directly to the city of Ayódhya. Fragrant forests came into view, streams and ponds, then villages and cities, but he sped past it all. Then, on the third day at dusk, the charioteer reached Ayódhya, and it was a dismal sight that met his eyes. 51.1

The city was silent and seemed deserted, and as he looked at it in deep dejection, Sumántra was overcome by a rush of grief and anxiously asked himself: "Can it be that the entire city, with its elephants and horses, its people and their lord, has been consumed by the fire of grief, in sorrow for Rama's suffering?" Lost in these anxious thoughts, the charioteer hurriedly entered. But as the charioteer Sumántra was advancing, men began to run toward him by the hundred and thousand, asking, "Where is Rama?" He told them, "I took leave of Rághava at the Ganges. The great and righteous prince dismissed me, and so I returned. The three of them have crossed the river." When the people heard this, their faces filled with tears, they sighed, "Alas!," and cried out, "Oh Rama!" And he heard what they said as they stood about in groups: "Now we are lost indeed, for we shall not see Rághava here again." "We will never again show ourselves at feasts or sacrifices, at weddings or great assemblies, since righteous Rama will not be there." "Like a father Rama watched over the city, pondering what was advantageous for the people, what would please them and bring them happiness." 51.5 51.10

Vātāyana|gatānāṃ ca strīṇām anvantarāpaṇam
Rāma|śok'|âbhitaptānāṃ śuśrāva paridevanam.
Sa rāja|mārga|madhyena Sumantraḥ pihit'|ānanaḥ
yatra rājā Daśarathas tad ev' ôpayayau gṛham.
So 'vatīrya rathāc chīghraṃ rāja|veśma praviśya ca
kakṣyāḥ sapt' âbhicakrāma mahā|jana|samākulāḥ.
Tato Daśaratha|strīṇāṃ prāsādebhyas tatas tataḥ
Rāma|śok'|âbhitaptānāṃ mandaṃ śuśrāva jalpitam:
«Saha Rāmeṇa niryāto vinā Rāmam ih' āgataḥ
sūtaḥ kiṃ nāma Kausalyāṃ śocantīṃ prativakṣyati?»
«Yathā ca manye durjīvam evaṃ na sukaraṃ dhruvam
ācchidya putre niryāte Kausalyā yatra jīvati.»
Satya|rūpaṃ tu tad|vākyaṃ rājñaḥ strīṇāṃ niśāmayan
pradīptam iva śokena viveśa sahasā gṛham.
Sa praviśy' âṣṭamīṃ kakṣyāṃ rājānaṃ dīnam ātulam
putra|śoka|paridyūnam apaśyat pāṇḍare gṛhe.
Abhigamya tam āsīnaṃ nar'|êndram abhivādya ca
Sumantro Rāma|vacanaṃ yath" ôktaṃ pratyavedayat.
Sa tūṣṇīm eva tac chrutvā rājā vibhrānta|cetanaḥ
mūrchito nyapatad bhūmau Rāma|śok'|âbhipīḍitaḥ.
Tato 'ntaḥ|puram āviddhaṃ mūrchite pṛthivī|patau
uddhṛtya bāhū cukrośa nṛpatau patite kṣitau.
Sumitrayā tu sahitā Kausalyā patitaṃ patim
utthāpayām āsa tadā vacanaṃ c' êdam abravīt:
«Imaṃ tasya mahā|bhāga dūtaṃ duṣkara|kāriṇaḥ
vana|vāsād anuprāptaṃ kasmān na pratibhāṣase?

Along the row of inner shops he heard the mourning of the women where they sat by their windows, suffering with grief for Rama. In the middle of the royal highway, Sumántra covered his face and went straight to Dasha·ratha's palace. Alighting swiftly from the chariot, he entered the king's compound and passed in turn through the seven courtyards, which were crowded with men of importance.

Here and there in the mansions he could hear the hushed comments of Dasha·ratha's wives, grief-stricken over Rama: "The charioteer went away with Rama and now has come back without him. What can he possibly say to Kausálya in her grief?" "As hard as it is for Kausálya to live, it must be, I guess, no easier to die, if she still lives despite her son's departure." Hearing the talk of the king's wives—and it was all too true—he quickly entered the palace that seemed engulfed in flames of grief.

He made his way through the eighth courtyard, and there in the pale white chamber he saw the king, desolate and anguished, tormented with grief for his son. Sumántra advanced to where the lord of men was sitting. Doing obeisance to him, he delivered Rama's message just as it had been told to him. The king listened in silence, and then, his mind reeling, he fell to the ground in a faint, overwhelmed by grief for Rama. Pain swept over the women of the inner chamber as the lord of the land grew faint. And as the king fell to the floor, they lifted up their arms and wailed. With Sumítra's help Kausálya raised up her fallen lord, and then she said: "Illustrious king, here is the messenger come from the prince who has done what no man ever did. He has returned from his sojourn in the forest. Why do you not

Ady' êmam a|nayaṃ kṛtvā vyapatrapasi Rāghava?
uttiṣṭha sukṛtaṃ te 'stu śoke na syāt sahāyatā.
Deva yasyā bhayād Rāmaṃ n' ânupṛcchasi sārathim
n' êha tiṣṭhati Kaikeyī viśrabdhaṃ pratibhāṣyatām.»
Sā tath" ôktvā mahā|rājaṃ Kausalyā śoka|lālasā
dharaṇyāṃ nipapāt' āśu bāṣpa|vipluta|bhāṣiṇī.
Evaṃ vilapatīṃ dṛṣṭvā Kausalyāṃ patitāṃ bhuvi
patiṃ c' âvekṣya tāḥ sarvāḥ sa|svaraṃ ruruduḥ striyaḥ.
51.30 Tatas tam antaḥ|pura|nādam utthitaṃ
samīkṣya vṛddhās taruṇāś ca mānavāḥ
striyaś ca sarvā ruruduḥ samantataḥ
puraṃ tad āsīt punar eva saṃkulam.

52.1 Pratyāśvasto yadā rājā mohāt pratyāgataḥ punaḥ
ath' ājuhāva taṃ sūtaṃ Rāma|vṛtt'|ânta|kāraṇāt.
Vṛddhaṃ parama|saṃtaptaṃ nava|graham iva dvipam
viniḥśvasantaṃ dhyāyantam asvastham iva kuñjaram.
Rājā tu rajasā sūtaṃ dhvast'|âṅgaṃ samupasthitam
aśru pūrṇa|mukhaṃ dīnam uvāca param'|ārtavat:
«Kva nu vatsyati dharm'|ātmā? vṛkṣa|mūlam upāśritaḥ?
so 'tyanta|sukhitaḥ sūta kim aśiṣyati Rāghavaḥ?
bhūmi|pāl'|ātmajo bhūmau śete katham a|nāthavat?
52.5 Yaṃ yāntam anuyānti sma padāti|ratha|kuñjarāḥ
sa vatsyati kathaṃ Rāmo vijanaṃ vanam āśritaḥ?
Vyālair mṛgair ācaritaṃ kṛṣṇa|sarpa|niṣevitam
kathaṃ kumārau Vaidehyā sārdhaṃ vanam upasthitau?

address him? Or are you at last ashamed, Rághava, of the calamitous thing you have done? Stand up, and set things right. Grief will render you no aid. Kaikéyi, for fear of whom you dare not ask the charioteer about Rama, is not here, my lord; you may speak freely."

So Kausálya spoke to the great king, and then, sick with grief, she suddenly fell to the floor, the rest of her words drowned in her tears. When the women saw Kausálya fall lamenting to the ground and looked at their lord, they all broke out in shrill weeping. And as the din arising from 51.30
the inner chamber reached them, men young and old alike and all the women broke out in weeping, so that once again every quarter of the city was thrown into confusion.

When the king had revived and recovered from his 52.1
faint, he summoned the charioteer to learn what had happened to Rama. The charioteer approached in desolation, his body coated with dust, his face bathed in tears—an old man deeply suffering like an elephant newly captured, and like the elephant heaving sighs, pensive and beside himself with grief. The king addressed him in deep anguish:

"Where is my righteous son living? Must he resort to the foot of a tree? Rághava has known every comfort, charioteer, what must he now eat? How can the son of the guardian of the earth lie down upon the earth like some helpless wretch? Foot soldiers, chariots and elephants used to follow Rama 52.5
wherever he went. How can he have gone off to live in the desolate forest? Wild animals range through it, black snakes infest it. How can the two young men and Vaidéhi have gone to the forest? How could the princes and poor Sita,

Sukumāryā tapasvinyā Sumantra saha Sītayā
rāja|putrau kathaṃ pādair avaruhya rathād gatau?
Siddh'|ârthaḥ khalu sūta tvaṃ yena dṛṣṭau mam' ātmajau
van'|ântaṃ praviśantau tāv aśvināv iva Mandaram.
Kim uvāca vaco Rāmaḥ? kim uvāca ca Lakṣmaṇaḥ?
Sumantra vanam āsādya kim uvāca ca Maithilī?
āsitaṃ śayitaṃ bhuktaṃ sūta Rāmasya kīrtaya.»
52.10 Iti sūto nar'|êndreṇa coditaḥ sajjamānayā
uvāca vācā rājānaṃ sa|bāṣpa|parirabdhayā:
«Abravīn māṃ mahā|rāja dharmam ev' ânupālayan
añjaliṃ Rāghavaḥ kṛtvā śiras" âbhipraṇamya ca:
‹sūta mad|vacanāt tasya tātasya vidit'|ātmanaḥ
śirasā vandanīyasya vandyau pādau mah"|ātmanaḥ.
Sarvam antaḥ|puraṃ vācyaṃ sūta mad|vacanāt tvayā
ārogyam aviśeṣeṇa yath"|ârhaṃ c' âbhivādanam.
Mātā ca mama Kausalyā kuśalaṃ c' âbhivādanam:
«devi devasya pādau ca devavat paripālaya.»
52.15 Bharataḥ kuśalaṃ vācyo vācyo mad|vacanena ca:
«sarvāsv eva yathā|nyāyaṃ vṛttiṃ vartasva mātṛṣu.»
Vaktavyaś ca mahā|bāhur Ikṣvāku|kula|nandanaḥ
«pitaraṃ yauvarājyastho rājyastham anupālaya.» ›
Ity evaṃ māṃ mahā|rāja bruvann eva mahā|yaśāḥ
Rāmo rājīva|tāmr'|âkṣo bhṛśam aśrūṇy avartayat.
Lakṣmaṇas tu susaṃkruddho niḥśvasan vākyam abravīt:
‹ken' âyam aparādhena rāja|putro vivāsitaḥ?
Yadi pravrājito Rāmo lobha|kāraṇa|kāritam

so delicate a young woman, have alighted from the chariot, Sumántra, and proceeded on foot? You at least have found fulfillment, charioteer, in seeing my sons entering the forest as the two Ashvins might enter onto Mount Mándara. What were Rama's words, Sumántra, what were Lákshmana's and Máithili's when they reached the forest? Tell me, charioteer, where Rama sat, where he slept, what he ate."

So the lord of men pressed the charioteer, and in a sob- 52.10
choked and breaking voice Sumántra answered the king: "Rághava cupped his hands in reverence and bowed his head, great king, and in perfect keeping with righteousness he said to me: 'Charioteer, in my name you must fall at the feet of my great and celebrated father, and pay him the homage he deserves. In my name, charioteer, you must ask the women of the inner chamber after their health, all of them without exception, and do obeisance to them according to rank. And you must ask my mother Kausálya after her welfare and do obeisance to her, saying, "My lady, ever venerate the feet of my lord as if he were a god." Ask 52.15
Bhárata after his welfare and tell him in my name, "You must observe proper conduct toward each and every one of our mothers." And tell him further, the great-armed prince, the delight of the Ikshváku House, "When you become prince regent you must defer to father, who remains the king." '

So glorious Rama spoke to me, great king, and as he did the tears rolled in a flood from his lotus-coppery eyes. But Lákshmana was furious, and heaving a sigh he said, 'For what crime has the prince been exiled? Whether it was the granting of a boon or some other selfish motive that led to Rama's banishment, in any event an evil thing has

vara|dāna|nimittaṃ vā sarvathā duṣkṛtaṃ kṛtam
Rāmasya tu parityāge na hetum upalakṣaye.
52.20 Asamīkṣya samārabdhaṃ viruddhaṃ buddhi|lāghavāt
janayiṣyati saṃkrośaṃ Rāghavasya vivāsanam.
Ahaṃ tāvan mahā|rāje pitṛtvaṃ n' ôpalakṣaye
bhrātā bhartā ca bandhuś ca pitā ca mama Rāghavaḥ.
Sarva|loka|priyaṃ tyaktvā sarva|loka|hite ratam
sarva|loko 'nurajyeta kathaṃ tv" ânena karmaṇā?›
Jānakī tu mahā|rāja niḥśvasantī tapasvinī
bhūt'|ôpahata|citt" êva viṣṭhitā vṛṣmṛtā sthitā.
Adṛṣṭa|pūrva|vyasanā rāja|putrī yaśasvinī
tena duḥkhena rudatī n' âiva māṃ kiṃ cid abravīt.
52.25 Udvīkṣamāṇā bhartāraṃ mukhena pariśuṣyatā
mumoca sahasā bāṣpaṃ māṃ prayāntam udīkṣya sā.
Tath" âiva Rāmo 'śru|mukhaḥ kṛt'|âñjaliḥ
sthito 'bhaval Lakṣmaṇa|bāhu|pālitaḥ
tath" âiva Sītā rudatī tapasvinī
nirīkṣate rāja|rathaṃ tath" âiva mām.»

53.1 «Mama tv aśvā nivṛttasya na prāvartanta vartmani
uṣṇam aśru vimuñcanto Rāme saṃprasthite vanam.
Ubhābhyāṃ rāja|putrābhyām atha kṛtv" âham ajñalim
prasthito ratham āsthāya tad duḥkham api dhārayan.
Guhena saha kṛtsnaṃ ca tatr' âiva divasaṃ sthitaḥ
āśayā yadi māṃ Rāmaḥ punaḥ śabdāpayed iti.
Viṣaye te mahā|rāja Rāma|vyasana|karśitāḥ
api vṛkṣāḥ parimlānaḥ sa|puṣp'|âṅkura|korakāḥ.

been done. I can see no reason at all for Rama to have been abandoned. The banishment of Rághava was a rash act, a perverse act of folly, that must provoke protest. I for one can no longer regard the great king as my father. Rághava shall now be brother, father, master and every kinsman to me. How could anyone in the world feel loyalty to you after doing such a thing, after abandoning the prince whom all the world loves and who is devoted to the welfare of all the world?'

Poor Jánaki stood heaving sighs, great king, motionless and oblivious as though a spirit possessed her. The glorious princess, who has never known adversity before, only wept in her sorrow and could not speak to me at all. She gazed up at her husband and her mouth went dry, and as she watched me leaving she suddenly burst into tears. That is just how it was—Rama standing still, his hands cupped in reverence, his face bathed in tears, protected by Lákshmana's arms; and poor Sita weeping as she gazed at the king's chariot, and at me."

"Now, as I was about to return, the horses would not take the road, and they shed hot tears as Rama set out to the forest. I cupped my hands in reverence to both princes and boarded the chariot, ready to set out despite the sorrow I felt for them. But I waited the whole day there with Guha in the hope that Rama might yet send word for me. Throughout your realm, great king, even the trees are tormented by Rama's calamity; they have wilted, flower, bud and branch. No creatures are moving about, no beasts stirring forth. The forest is overcome with grief for Rama, and its murmur has

Na ca sarpanti sattvāni vyālā na prasaranti ca
Rāma|śok'|âbhibhūtaṃ tan niṣkūjam abhavad vanam.
Līna|puṣkara|patrāś ca nar'|êndra|kaluṣ'|ôdakāḥ
saṃtapta|padmāḥ padminyo līna|mīna|vihaṃgamāḥ.
Jalajāni ca puṣpāṇi mālyāni sthalajāni ca
n' âdya bhānty alpa|gandhīni phalāni ca yathā puram.

Praviśantam Ayodhyāṃ māṃ na kaś cid abhinandati
narā Rāmam apaśyanto niḥśvasanti muhur muhuḥ.
Harmyair vimānaiḥ prāsādair avekṣya ratham āgatam
hāhākāra|kṛtā nāryo Rām'|âdarśana|karśitāḥ.
Āyatair vimalair netrair aśru|vega|pariplutaiḥ
anyonyam abhivīkṣante 'vyaktam ārtatarāḥ striyaḥ.
N' âmitrāṇāṃ na mitrāṇām udāsīna|janasya ca
aham ārtatayā kaṃ cid viśeṣaṃ n' ôpalakṣaye.
Aprahṛṣṭa|manuṣyā ca dīna|nāga|turaṃgamā
ārta|svara|parimlānā viniḥśvasita|niḥsvanā.
Nirānandā mahā|rāja Rāma|pravrājan'|ātulā
Kausalyā putra hīn" êva Ayodhyā pratibhāti mā.»

Sūtasya vacanaṃ śrutvā vācā parama|dīnayā
bāṣp'|ôpahatayā rājā taṃ sūtam idam abravīt:
«Kaikeyyā viniyuktena pāp'|âbhijana|bhāvayā
mayā na mantra|kuśalair vṛddhaiḥ saha samarthitam
Na suhṛdbhir na c' âmātyair mantrayitvā na naigamaiḥ
may" âyam arthaḥ saṃmohāt strī|hetoḥ sahasā kṛtaḥ
Bhavitavyatayā nūnam idaṃ vā vyasanaṃ mahat
kulasy' âsya vināśāya prāptaṃ sūta yadṛcchayā

been stilled. In the lotus ponds the lilies have closed their petals, lord of men, and the waters have grown turbid. The lotuses have withered, and the fish and birds have hidden themselves. Blossoms that grow in water, flowers that grow on land, and fruits have lost their familiar luster, and their fragrance is all but gone.

No one welcomed me as I entered Ayódhya. The men, not seeing Rama, heaved sighs incessantly. From mansions, many-storied buildings and palaces the women observed the chariot come, and they raised cries of woe, tormented at losing the sight of Rama. More anguished than ever be- 53.10
fore, the ladies looked at one another dimly, through large and once-bright eyes that rushing tears had overwhelmed. I could detect no disparity in the anguish felt by friends, enemies or neutrals. The people have lost all delight, the elephants and horses are desolate, the city wilts at the cries of anguish and reverberates with sighs, joyless and tormented by Rama's banishment. It almost seems to me, your majesty, as if Ayódhya, like Kausálya herself, had been bereft of her only son."

When he heard the charioteer's report, the king replied in a most desolate, sob-choked voice: "Kaikéyi, a woman 53.15
of evil family and evil designs, forced me, and I failed to seek the advice of elders skilled in counsel. I failed to take counsel with my friends, my ministers and wise *brahman*s. It was on my own, in delusion, for a woman's sake that I did the rash thing I have done. Or perhaps—yes, surely charioteer, this great calamity was something destined to be, that had somehow to happen, to bring ruin upon this House. If I have ever done you a kind deed, charioteer, you

Sūta yady asti te kiṃ cin may” âpi sukṛtaṃ kṛtam
tvaṃ prāpay’ āśu māṃ Rāmaṃ prāṇāḥ saṃtvarayanti mām
Yad yad y” âpi mam’ âiv’ ājñā nivartayatu Rāghavam!
na śakṣyāmi vinā Rāma muhūrtam api jīvitum
53.20 Atha v” âpi mahā|bāhur gato dūraṃ bhaviṣyati
mām eva ratham āropya śīghraṃ Rāmāya darśaya.
Vṛtta|daṃṣṭro maheṣvāsaḥ kv’ âsau Lakṣmaṇa|pūrvajaḥ
yadi jīvāmi sādhv enaṃ paśyeyaṃ saha Sītayā.
Lohit’|âkṣaṃ mahā|bāhum āmukta|maṇi|kuṇḍalam
Rāmaṃ yadi na paśyāmi gamiṣyāmi yama|kṣayam.
Ato nu kiṃ duḥkhataraṃ yo ’ham Ikṣvāku|nandanam
imām avasthām āpanno n’ êha paśyāmi Rāghavam.
Hā Rāma! Rām’|ânuja! hā hā Vaidehi tapasvinī!
na māṃ jānīta duḥkhena mriyamāṇam a|nāthavat
dustaro jīvatā devi may” âyaṃ śoka|sāgaraḥ.
53.25 Aśobhanaṃ yo ’ham ih’ âdya Rāghavaṃ
didṛkṣamāṇo na labhe sa|Lakṣmaṇam»
it’ îva rājā vilapan mahā|yaśāḥ
papāta tūrṇaṃ śayane sa mūrchitaḥ.
Iti vilapati pārthive pranaṣṭe
karuṇataraṃ dvi|guṇaṃ ca Rāma|hetoḥ
vacanam anuniśamya tasya devī
bhayam agamat punar eva Rāma|mātā.

54.1 Tato bhūt’|ôpasṛṣṭ” êva vepamānā punaḥ punaḥ
dharaṇyāṃ gata|sattv” êva Kausalyā sūtam abravīt.
«Naya māṃ yatra Kākutsthaḥ Sītā yatra ca Lakṣmaṇaḥ.
tān vinā kṣaṇam apy atra jīvituṃ n’ ôtsahe hy aham.

must bring Rama back to me at once—and hurry, for my life depends upon it. If only my express command might even yet make Rághava turn back! I shall not be able to live a moment without Rama.

But then, my great-armed son must have travelled far 53.20
away by now. Then put me on the chariot and swiftly bring me within sight of Rama. Where is Lákshmana's eldest brother, the great bowman with pearly teeth? Oh please, I must see him and Sita if I am to live. If I cannot see Rama, those coppery eyes of his, those great arms, the jewelled earrings that he wears, I shall go to the house of Yama. What greater sorrow can there be than this, that in the state to which I am reduced, Rághava, the delight of the Ikshvákus, is not here for me to see. Oh Rama! Oh younger brother of Rama! Oh poor Vaidéhi! You did not know I would die helplessly in sorrow. Too wide, my lady, is this ocean of grief, too wide for me to cross alive. What misfortune to be 53.25
denied the chance to see them, Rághava and Lákshmana, here and now when I so need to see them." Thus the glorious king lamented until suddenly he fell back in a faint upon the couch. Thus the king lamented over Rama before his mind went dark, and his words were so doubly piteous that as the queen, Rama's mother, listened, terror seized her once again.

TREMBLING CONSTANTLY AS though a spirit possessed her, 54.1
Kausálya spoke to the charioteer from the ground where she lay almost lifeless. "Take me where Kakútstha is, and Sita and Lákshmana. I cannot bear to live here without them for even an instant. Quickly turn the chariot around and

Nivartaya rathaṃ śīghraṃ Daṇḍakān naya mām api.
atha tān n' ânugacchāmi gamiṣyāmi yama|kṣayam.»

Bāṣpa|veg'|ôpahatayā sa vācā sajjamānayā
idam āśvāsayan devīṃ sūtaḥ prāñjalir abravīt.
«Tyaja śokaṃ ca mohaṃ ca saṃbhramaṃ duḥkhajaṃ tathā
vyavadhūya ca saṃtāpaṃ vane vatsyati Rāghavaḥ.
Lakṣmaṇaś c' âpi Rāmasya pādau paricaran vane
ārādhayati dharmajñaḥ para|lokaṃ jit'|êndriyaḥ.
Vijane 'pi vane Sītā vāsaṃ prāpya gṛheṣv iva
visrambhaṃ labhate 'bhītā Rāme saṃnyasta|mānasā.
N' âsyā dainyaṃ kṛtaṃ kiṃ cit susūkṣmam api lakṣaye
ucit" êva pravāsānāṃ Vaidehī pratibhāti me.
Nagar'|ôpavanaṃ gatvā yathā sma ramate purā
tath" âiva ramate Sītā nirjaneṣu vaneṣv api.
Bāl" êva ramate Sītā bāla|candra|nibh'|ānanā
Rāmā Rāme hy a|dīn'|ātmā vijane 'pi vane satī.
Tad|gataṃ hṛdayaṃ hy asyās tad adhīnaṃ ca jīvitam
Ayodhy" âpi bhavet tasyā Rāma|hīnā tathā vanam.

Pathi pṛcchati Vaidehī grāmāṃś ca nagarāṇi ca
gatiṃ dṛṣṭvā nadīnāṃ ca pādapān vividhān api.
Adhvanā vāta|vegena saṃbhrameṇ' ātapena ca
na hi gacchati Vaidehyāś candr'|âṃśu|sadṛśī prabhā.
Sadṛśaṃ śata|patrasya pūrṇa|candr'|ôpama|prabham
vadanaṃ tad vadānyāyā Vaidehyā na vikampate.
Alakta|rasa|rakt'|ābhāv alakta|rasa|varjitau

take me as well to the Dándakas. If I cannot go after them, I will go to the house of Yama."

The charioteer cupped his hands in reverence, and in a breaking voice choked by rushing sobs, he tried to comfort the queen. "Put away your grief and confusion, and your 54.5
consternation over this sorrowful event. Rághava himself is living in the forest free from any sadness. Lákshmana, too, by humbly serving Rama in the forest, by his self-restraint, and sense of duty, is winning the higher world. Sita is making her dwelling in the forest, desolate place though it is, as if she were at home. She has entrusted her heart to Rama and is full of confidence and unafraid. I did not perceive that Vaidéhi felt any despair, not the slightest. She seemed to me almost accustomed to the hardships of exile. Sita takes the same delight in the desolate forests that she used to have when going out to the city gardens. The delightful 54.10
Sita with her full-moon face is enjoying herself like a young girl, delighting in Rama and not at all despondent, in the desolate forest though she may be. For her heart belongs to him, and her life depends on him. Ayódhya itself, with Rama gone, would be far more of a wilderness to her.

On the road Vaidéhi asks about the villages and cities she sees, the courses of rivers and the different kinds of trees. No journey or gusting wind, no distress or scorching heat can dim Vaidéhi's moonbeam radiance. Sweet Vaidéhi's face has not suffered any change; it still resembles the hundred-petalled lotus, still looks as radiant as the full moon. Her 54.15
feet, radiant as lotus cups, remain as rosy as liquid lac even now, when she must do without it. Even now when she has

ady' âpi caraṇau tasyāḥ padma|kośa|sama|prabhau.
Nūpur'|ôdghuṣṭa|hel" êva khelaṃ gacchati bhāminī
idānīm api Vaidehī tad|rāgā nyasta|bhūṣaṇā.
Gajaṃ vā vīkṣya siṃhaṃ vā vyāghraṃ vā vanam āśritā
n' āhārayati saṃtrāsaṃ bāhū Rāmasya saṃśritā.
Na śocyās te na c' ātmā te śocyo n' âpi jan'|âdhipaḥ
idaṃ hi caritaṃ loke pratiṣṭhāsyati śāśvatam.
Vidhūya śokaṃ parihṛṣṭa|mānasā
maha|ṛṣi|yāte pathi suvyavasthitāḥ
vane ratā vanya|phal'|âśanāḥ pituḥ
śubhāṃ pratijñāṃ paripālayanti te.»
54.20 Tath" âpi sūtena suyukta|vādinā
nivāryamāṇā suta|śoka|karśitā
na c' âiva devī virarāma kūjitāt
«priy' êti» «putr' êti» ca «Rāghav' êti» ca.

55.1 Vanaṃ gate dharma|pare Rāme ramayatāṃ vare
Kausalyā rudatī svārtā bhartāram idam abravīt:
«Yady apitriṣu lokeṣu prathitaṃ te mahad yaśaḥ
s'|ânukrośo vadānyaś ca priya|vādī ca Rāghavaḥ.
Kathaṃ nara|vara|śreṣṭha putrau tau saha Sītayā
duḥkhitau sukha|saṃvṛddhau vane duḥkhaṃ sahiṣyataḥ?
Sā nūnaṃ taruṇī śyāmā sukumārī sukh'|ôcitā
katham uṣṇaṃ ca śītaṃ ca Maithilī prasahiṣyate?
55.5 Bhuktv" âśanaṃ viśāl'|âkṣī sūpadaṃś|ânvitaṃ śubham
vanyaṃ naivāram āhāraṃ kathaṃ Sīt" ôpabhokṣyate?
Gīta|vāditra|nirghoṣaṃ śrutvā śubham aninditā

cast off her jewelry out of love for him, beautiful Vaidéhi moves as gracefully as if she were dancing with anklets sounding. In the forest, when she spies an elephant, a lion or tiger, she slips within Rama's arms and so does not take fright. You must not grieve for them or for yourself; you must not grieve for the lord of the people. For theirs are exploits the world will keep alive in memory forever. They have shaken off their grief and their hearts are joyful. They are keeping firmly to the path the great seers have taken; they find delight in the forest, have fruit of the forest to eat, and are making good their father's promise."

Yet for all the charioteer's attempts to restrain the queen 54.20
with such well-reasoned words, she was still tormented with grief for her child and would not stop moaning, "Rághava!" "My darling!" "My son!"

Kausálya wept for Rama, the most pleasing of men, 55.1
gone to the forest in his adherence to righteousness. And she said in bitter anguish to her husband: "Your fame is great, widespread throughout the three worlds—Rághava is compassionate, they say, generous and kind-spoken. How, then, best of kings, could your sons and Sita have been made to suffer so? They were raised in comfort, how will they endure the sufferings of the forest? How in heaven's name will Máithili, a woman in the bloom of youth, so delicate and used to comfort, endure the heat and the cold? Large-eyed Sita has 55.5
always had savory dishes to eat, exquisitely seasoned. How will she eat the food of the forest, plain rice growing wild? The faultless woman has always heard agreeable sounds, the

kathaṃ kravyāda|siṃhānāṃ śabdaṃ śroṣyaty a|śobhanam?
Mah”|êndra|dhvaja|saṃkāśaḥ kva nu śete mahā|bhujaḥ
bhujaṃ parigha|saṃkāśam upadhāya mahā|balaḥ?
Padma|varṇaṃ sukeśāntaṃ padma|niḥśvāsam uttamam
kadā drakṣyāmi Rāmasya vadanaṃ puṣkar’|ēkṣaṇam?
Vajra|sāra|mayaṃ nūnaṃ hṛdayaṃ me na saṃśayaḥ
apaśyantyā na taṃ yad vai phalatīdaṃ sahasradhā?
55.10 Yadi pañca|daśe varṣe Rāghavaḥ punar eṣyati
jahyād rājyaṃ ca kośaṃ ca Bharaten’ ôpabhokṣyate.
Evaṃ kanīyasā bhrātrā bhuktaṃ rājyaṃ viśāṃ pate
bhrātā jyeṣṭhā variṣṭhāś ca kima|rthaṃ n’ âvamaṃsyate?
Na pareṇ’ āhṛtaṃ bhakṣyaṃ vyāghraḥ khāditum icchati
evam eva nara|vyāghraḥ para|līḍhaṃ na maṃsyate.
Havir ājyaṃ puroḍāśāḥ kuśā yūpāś ca khādirāḥ
n’ âitāni yāta|yāmāni kurvanti punar adhvare.
Tathā hy āttam idaṃ rājyaṃ hṛta|sārāṃ surām iva
n’ âbhimantum alaṃ Rāmo naṣṭa|somam iv’ âdhvaram.
55.15 N’ âivaṃ|vidham a|sat|kāraṃ Rāghavo marṣayiṣyati
balavān iva śārdūlo bāladher abhimarśanam.
Sa tādṛśaḥ siṃha|balo vṛṣa|bhākṣo nara|ṛṣabhaḥ!
svayam eva hataḥ pitrā jalajen’ ātmajo yathā!
Dvijāti carito dharmaḥ śāstra|dṛṣṭaḥ sanātanaḥ
yadi te dharma|nirate tvayā putre vivāsite.

sounds of singing and musical instruments. How will she stand it to hear the awful roaring of flesh-eating lions?

My great-armed son, like the banner of great Indra! Where must he be sleeping, with no pillow but his iron-hard arm? When shall I see Rama's perfect face again, lotus-hued, with hair so thick, his eyes like lotus petals, his breath scented like a lotus? Surely my heart is made of adamant; how otherwise, with him gone from my sight, would it not shatter into a thousand fragments? Even if Rághava should return 55.10
in the fifteenth year, he would spurn both the kingship and the treasury, since Bhárata will have possessed them. When a younger brother has had possession of the kingship like this, lord of the peoples, why would the eldest and best brother not disdain it? A tiger will not eat the food another beast has fed upon. In the same way the tiger among men will scorn what another has tasted.

One does not use again in a sacrifice the oblation, clarified butter, rice cakes, *kusha* grass or posts of *khádira* wood, once they have rendered their service. This kingdom, in like manner, will have no value for Rama. It will have been consumed, like a cup of wine drained to the lees, like a sacrifice when the soma has run out. Rághava will not suffer 55.15
an insult of this sort, any more than a powerful tiger suffers having its tail pulled. Such a man, a bull among men, with the power of a lion, the eyes of a bull! That his own father should destroy him, the way a fish destroys its offspring! If only you had kept to the age-old way of righteousness followed by the twice-born and set down in the sacred texts, before you exiled a son so earnest in righteousness.

Gatir ekā patir nāryā dvitīyā gatir ātmajaḥ
tṛtīyā jñātayo rājaṃś caturthī n' êha vidyate.
Tatra tvaṃ c' âiva me n' âsti Rāmaś ca vanam āśritaḥ
na vanaṃ gantum icchāmi sarvathā hi hatā tvayā.
Hataṃ tvayā rājyam idaṃ sa|rāṣṭraṃ
hatas tath" ātmā saha mantribhiś ca
hatā sa|putr" âsmi! hatāś ca paurāḥ!
sutaś ca bhāryā ca tava prahṛṣṭau.»
Imāṃ giraṃ dāruṇa|śabda|saṃśritāṃ
niśamya rāj" âpi mumoha duḥkhitaḥ.
tataḥ sa śokaṃ praviveśa pārthivaḥ
sva|duṣkṛtaṃ c' âpi punas tad" âsmarat.

Evaṃ tu kruddhayā rājā Rāma|mātrā sa|śokayā
śrāvitaḥ paruṣaṃ vākyaṃ cintayām āsa duḥkhitaḥ.
Tasya cintayamānasya pratyabhāt karma duṣkṛtam
yad anena kṛtaṃ pūrvam ajñānāc chabda|vedhinā.
Amanās tena śokena Rāma|śokena ca prabhuḥ
dahyamānas tu śokābhyāṃ Kausalyām āha bhū|patiḥ:
«Prasādaye tvāṃ Kausalye! racito 'yaṃ may" âñjaliḥ
vatsalā c' ânṛśaṃsā ca tvaṃ hi nityaṃ pareṣv api.
Bhartā tu khalu nārīṇāṃ guṇavān nirguṇo 'pi vā
dharmaṃ vimṛśamānānāṃ pratyakṣaṃ devi daivatam.
Sā tvaṃ dharma|parā nityaṃ dṛṣṭa|loka|par'|âvara
n' ârhase vipriyaṃ vaktuṃ duḥkhit" âpi suduḥkhitam.»

A woman's first recourse is her husband, your majesty, her second is her son, her third her kinsmen. She has no fourth in this world. But you are no recourse for me, and Rama is off in the forest. I do not want to go to the forest; you have totally destroyed me. You have destroyed this kingship and this kingdom, and all the people of the city; you have destroyed your counsellors and yourself, destroyed me and my son! Your son and your wife should be delighted now." As he listened to the harrowing words she uttered, the king grew faint, overcome with sorrow. He plumbed the very depths of his grief, and there a memory was revived of something evil he once did. 55.20

SUCH WERE THE harsh words that Rama's mother in grief and anger forced the king to hear. And he was overcome with sorrow and fell to brooding. And as he brooded there suddenly flashed upon his mind an evil deed he had once done, unintentionally, long ago, when he was shooting arrows by the sound of the target alone. This grief and his grief for Rama were driving him out of his mind. The mighty lord of earth, consumed now by a double grief, said to Kausálya: "I beg your forgiveness, Kausálya! Here, I cup my hands in supplication. Always, even to strangers, you have been kindly and never cruel. And as you know, my lady, a woman who has regard for righteousness should hold her husband, whether he is virtuous or not, to be a deity incarnate. You have always kept to the ways of righteousness; you can tell good people from bad. Sorrowful though you are, you ought not to speak so unkindly to one more sorrowful still." 56.1 56.5

Tad vākyaṃ karuṇaṃ rājñaḥ śrutvā dīnasya bhāṣitam
Kausalyā vyasṛjad bāṣpaṃ praṇālīva nav'|ôdakam.
Sa mūdrhṇi baddhvā rudatī rājñaḥ padmam iv' âñjalim
saṃbhramād abravīt trastā tvaramāṇ'|âkṣaraṃ vacaḥ:
«Prasīda śirasā yāce bhūmau nipatitāsmi te
yācitāsmi hatā deva hantavy" âhaṃ na hi tvayā.
N' âiṣā hi sā strī bhavati ślāghanīyena dhīmatā
ubhayor lokayor vīra patyā yā saṃprasādyate.
Jānāmi dharmaṃ dharma|jña tvāṃ jāne satya|vādinam
putra|śok'|ārtayā tat tu mayā kim api bhāṣitam.
Śoko nāśayate dhairyaṃ śoko nāśayate śrutam
śoko nāśayate sarvaṃ n' âsti śoka|samo ripuḥ.
Śakyam āpatitaḥ soḍhuṃ prahāro ripu|hastataḥ
soḍhum āpatitaḥ śokaḥ susūkṣmo 'pi na śakyate.
Vana|vāsāya Rāmasya pañca|rātro 'dya gaṇyate
yaḥ śoka|hata|harṣāyāḥ pañca|varṣ'|ôpamo mama.
Taṃ hi cintayamānāyāḥ śoko 'yaṃ hṛdi vardhate
nadīnām iva vegena samudra|salilaṃ mahat.»

Evaṃ hi kathayantyās tu Kausalyāyāḥ śubhaṃ vacaḥ
manda|raśmir abhūt sūryo rajanī c' âbhyavartata.
Atha prahlādito vākyair devyā Kausalyayā nṛpaḥ
śokena ca samākrānto nidrāyā vaśam eyivān.

As Kausálya listened to the pitiful words the king uttered in his desolation, tears began to fall from her eyes like fresh rainwater down a runnel. And as she cried she cupped her hands like a lotus and raised them to her head before the king. Confused and alarmed, she spoke, the syllables racing one after the other: "Forgive me, I bow my head, I fall before you to the ground and beg you. It hurts me so that you should beg me, my lord, and you ought not to hurt me. She is counted no real wife in this world or the next, my mighty lord, whose wise husband, deserving of her praise, must beg her forgiveness. I do know what is right, my righteous husband, I know you speak the truth. What I said was something uttered in the anguish of grief for my son. Grief destroys restraint, grief destroys all one has learned, grief destroys everything. No enemy is the equal of grief. An unexpected blow from an enemy's hand might be withstood, but to withstand unexpected grief, however slight, is all but impossible. Only five nights all told have now passed with Rama living in the forest; but this grief that robs me of every delight makes it seem like five years. As I think about him the grief grows here, in my heart, just as the waters of the ocean grow great with rivers ever rushing in."

Such were Kausálya's heartfelt words, and while she was speaking the sun's rays began to fade, and evening came on. And the king, both gladdened by what Queen Kausálya said and overburdened with grief, yielded to sleep.

57.1 PRATIBUDDHO MUHUR TENA śok'|ôpahata|cetanaḥ
atha rājā Daśarathaḥ sa cintām abhyapadyata.
Rāma|Lakṣmaṇayoś c' âiva vivāsād vāsav'|ôpamam
āviveś' ôpasargas taṃ tamaḥ sūryam iv' âsuram.
Sa rājā rajanīṃ ṣaṣṭhīṃ Rāme pravrajite vanam
ardha|rātre Daśarathaḥ saṃsmaran duṣkṛtaṃ kṛtam
Kausalyāṃ putra|śok'|ārtām idaṃ vacanam abravīt:

«Yad ācarati kalyāṇi śubhaṃ vā yadi v" âśubham
tad eva labhate bhadre kartā karmajam ātmanaḥ.
57.5 Guru lāghavam arthānām ārambhe karmaṇāṃ phalam
doṣaṃ vā yo na jānāti sa bāla iti h' ôcyate.
Kaś cid āmra|vaṇaṃ chittvā palāśāṃś ca niṣiñcati
puṣpaṃ dṛṣṭvā phale gṛdhnuḥ sa śocati phal'|āgame.
So 'ham āmra|vaṇaṃ chittvā palāśāṃś ca nyaṣecayam
Rāmaṃ phal'|āgame tyaktvā paścāc chocāmi durmatiḥ.
Labdha|śabdena Kausalye kumāreṇa dhanuṣmatā
‹kumāraḥ śabda|vedh' îti› mayā pāpam idaṃ kṛtam
tad idaṃ me 'nusaṃprāptaṃ devi duḥkhaṃ svayaṃ kṛtam,
Saṃmohād iha bālena yathā syād bhakṣitaṃ viṣam
evaṃ mam' âpy avijñātaṃ śabda|vedhya|mayaṃ phalam.

A SHORT TIME later, his heart crushed by grief, King Dasha·ratha awoke, and began to brood once more. Heartache over the exile of Rama and Lákshmana once more swept over him, the equal of Vásava, as the demon's darkness sweeps over the sun. It was at midnight, on that sixth night since Rama's banishment to the forest, when King Dasha·ratha fully remembered the evil deed he had once done. He then addressed Kausálya, who lay anguished with grief for her son: 57.1

"Whatever a person does, be it good or evil, my dear and precious wife, he receives in like measure, the direct result of the deeds he has done himself. One deserves to be 57.5 called a fool who sets about a deed without understanding the gravity of its consequences, what he stands to gain or lose. A person who cuts down a mango grove and instead waters flame trees—made greedy for their fruit by the sight of their flowers—would be sorry when that fruit appears. I cut down a mango grove and watered flame trees instead. When the fruit appeared I had to give up Rama, and now, too late, I see my folly and grieve. When I was a young man, Kausálya, I earned a reputation as a bowman. It was said, 'The prince can shoot by the sound of the target alone.' But I did an evil deed, my lady, and it has now come home to me, this sorrow that I have brought upon myself. But just as a child might eat something poisonous out of ignorance, so I, too, was unaware of the fruits my shooting by sound would bear.

Devy anūḍhā tvam abhavo yuvarājo bhavāmy aham
tataḥ prāvṛḍ anuprāptā mad|akāma|vivardhinī.
Upāsyahi rasān bhaumāṃs taptvā ca jagad aṃśubhiḥ
paret'|ācaritāṃ bhīmāṃ ravir āviśate diśam.
Uṣṇam antardadhe sadyaḥ snigdhā dadṛśire ghanāḥ
tato jahṛṣire sarve bheka|sāraṅga|barhiṇaḥ.
Patiten' âmbhasā channaḥ patamānena c' âsakṛt
ābabhau matta|sāraṅgas toya|rāśir iv' âcalaḥ.
Tasminn atisukhe kāle dhanuṣmān iṣumān rathī
vyāyāma|kṛta|saṃkalpaḥ Sarayūm anvagāṃ nadīm.
Nipāne mahiṣaṃ rātrau gajaṃ v" âbhyāgataṃ nadīm
anyaṃ vā śvāpadaṃ kaṃ cij jighāṃsur a|jit'|êndriyaḥ.

Ath' ândhakāre tv aśrauṣaṃ jale kumbhasya paryataḥ
a|cakṣur viṣaye ghoṣaṃ vāraṇasy' êva nardataḥ.
Tato 'haṃ śaram uddhṛtya dīptam āśīviṣ'|ôpamam
amuñcaṃ niśitaṃ bāṇam aham āśīviṣ'|ôpamam.

Tatra vāg uṣasi vyaktā prādurāsīd van'|âukasaḥ
‹hā! h" êti› patatas toye vāg abhūt tatra mānuṣī:
‹katham asmad|vidhe śastraṃ nipatet tu tapasvini?
Praviviktāṃ nadīṃ rātrāv udāhāro 'ham āgataḥ
iṣuṇ" âbhihataḥ kena kasya vā kiṃ kṛtaṃ mayā?
Ṛṣer hi nyasta|daṇḍasya vane vanyena jīvataḥ
kathaṃ nu śastreṇa vadho mad|vidhasya vidhīyate?
Jaṭā|bhāra|dharasy' âiva valkal'|âjina|vāsasaḥ
ko vadhena mam' ârthī syāt kiṃ v" âsy' âpakṛtaṃ mayā?

We were not yet married, my lady, and I was still prince regent. The rains had come, the season that quickens lust and desire. After having drawn up the moisture of the earth and scorched the world with its rays, the sun had entered the awful region the dead inhabit. All at once the heat vanished, dark rain clouds appeared and all creatures began to rejoice—frogs, cuckoos, peacocks. Engulfed by the rain that had fallen and continued to fall incessantly, the mountain with its wild white cuckoos looked like one vast body of water. At this most pleasant of seasons I decided to take some exercise, and with bow and arrows and chariot I set out along the Sárayu River. I was an intemperate youth, eager to kill a buffalo at the water hole in the nighttime, an elephant coming down to the river, or some other wild animal. 57.10 57.15

Now, in the darkness I heard a noise, beyond the range of vision, of a pitcher being filled in the water, but just like the sound an elephant makes. I drew out a shaft that glared like a poisonous snake. I shot the keen-edged arrow, and it darted like a poisonous snake.

And there, as day was breaking, the voice of a forest dweller rang out clearly, 'Ah! Ah!'—the voice of a young man crying there as he fell into the water: 'Why should someone shoot a weapon at a person like me, an ascetic? I came to the deserted river at night only to fetch water. Who has struck me with an arrow? What have I done to anyone? I am a seer who has renounced violence, who lives in the wilderness on things of the wild. Why should someone take up a weapon to kill a person like me? The one burden I carry is my matted hair, my garments are nothing but bark cloth and hides. What could anyone stand to gain by killing me? 57.20

Evaṃ niṣphalam ārabdhaṃ keval'|ânartha|saṃhitam
na kaś cit sādhu manyeta yath" âiva guru|talpagam?
N' êmaṃ tath" ânuśocāmi jīvita|kṣayam ātmanaḥ
mātaraṃ pitaraṃ c' ôbhāv anuśocāmi mad|vidhe.
Tad etān mithunaṃ vṛddhaṃ cira|kāla|bhṛtaṃ mayā
mayi pañcatvam āpanne kāṃ vṛttiṃ vartayiṣyati?
57.25 Vṛddhau ca mātā|pitarāv ahaṃ c' âik'|êṣuṇā hataḥ!
kena sma nihatāḥ sarve subālen' âkṛt'|ātmanā?›

Taṃ giraṃ karuṇāṃ śrutvā mama dharm'|ânukāṅkṣiṇaḥ
karābhyāṃ sa|śaraṃ cāpaṃ vyathitasy' âpatad bhuvi.
Taṃ deśam aham āgamya dīna|sattvaḥ sudurmanāḥ
apaśyam iṣuṇā tīre Sarayvās tāpasaṃ hatam.
Sa mām udvīkṣya netrābhyāṃ trastam a|svastha|cetasam
ity uvāca vacaḥ krūraṃ didhakṣann iva tejasā:
‹kiṃ tav' âpakṛtaṃ rājan vane nivasatā mayā
jihīrṣiur ambho gurv|arthaṃ yad ahaṃ tāḍitas tvayā?
57.30 Ekena khalu bāṇena marmaṇy abhihate mayi
dvāv andhau nihatau vṛddhau mātā janayitā ca me.
Tau nūnaṃ durbalāv andhau mat|pratīkṣau pipāsitau
ciram āśā|kṛtāṃ tṛṣṇāṃ kaṣṭāṃ saṃdhārayiṣyataḥ.

What wrong could I have done him? No, he cannot have had any purpose at all in what he did; pure malice must have prompted it. No one shall ever forgive him, like the man who violates his *guru*'s bed. But it is not for the loss of my own life that I am grieving so. It is for two others I grieve that am slain, my mother and father. For they are an aged couple and have long been dependent on me. When I am dead what sort of existence are they to lead? My aged 57.25
mother and father and I all slain by a single arrow! Who can have been so reckless, so malicious as to strike us down all at once?'

When I heard that piteous voice, I who had always striven to do right, I shuddered and the bow and arrow dropped from my hands to the ground. Desolate to my innermost being, in the depths of misery I went to the place and saw on the bank of the Sárayu an ascetic struck down by my arrow. He fixed me with his eyes—I was beside myself with terror—and he spoke these harrowing words as though ready to burn me up with his ascetic power: 'What harm have I, living here in the forest, ever done to you, your majesty, that you should attack me when all I wanted was to fetch some water for my elders? The very same arrow that 57.30
has pierced me to the quick has also struck down two blind old people, my mother and my father. The two of them are frail and blind; they are thirsty and waiting for me. And now they will have to bear their parching thirst, as long as they can, on the strength of hope alone.

‹na nūnaṃ tapaso v" âsti phala|yogaḥ śrutasya vā
pitā yan māṃ na jānāti śayānaṃ patitaṃ bhuvi.
Jānann api ca kiṃ kuryād? a|śaktir aparikramaḥ
bhidyamānam iv' âśaktas trātum anyo nago nagam.
Pitus tvam eva me gatvā śīghram ācakṣva Rāghava
na tvām anudahet kruddho vanaṃ vahnir iv' âidhitaḥ.
57.35 Iyam eka|padī rājan yato me pitur āśramaḥ
taṃ prasādaya gatvā tvaṃ na tvāṃ sa kupitaḥ śapet.
Viśalyaṃ kuru māṃ rājan marma me niśitaḥ śaraḥ
ruṇaddhi mṛdu s'|ôtsedhaṃ tīram ambu|rayo yathā.
Na dvijātir ahaṃ rājan mā bhūt te manaso vyathā
śūdrāyām asmi vaiśyena jāto jana|pad'|âdhipa.›

It' îva vadataḥ kṛcchrād bāṇ'|âbhihata|marmaṇaḥ
tasya tv ānamyamānasya taṃ bāṇam aham uddharam.
Jal'|ārdra|gātraṃ tu vilapya kṛcchān
marma|vraṇaṃ saṃtatam ucchasantam
tataḥ Sarayvāṃ tam ahaṃ śayānaṃ
samīkṣya bhadre subhṛśaṃ viṣaṇṇaḥ.»

58.1 «Tad ajñānān mahat pāpaṃ kṛtvā saṃkulit'|êndriyaḥ
ekas tv acintayaṃ buddhyā kathaṃ nu sukṛtaṃ bhavet.
Tatas taṃ ghaṭam ādaya pūrṇaṃ parama|vāriṇā
āśramaṃ tam ahaṃ prāpya yath"|ākhyāta|pathaṃ gataḥ.
Tatr' âhaṃ durbalāv andhau vṛddhāv apariṇāyakau
apaśyaṃ tasya pitarau lūna|pakṣāv iva dvijau.
Tan|nimittābhir āsīnau kathābhir aparikramau

'I now see there is no reward for austerity or learning, since my father does not know that I lie fallen upon the ground. And even if he knew, what could he do? He is helpless and unable even to move about, as helpless as one tree to save another that is being felled. You yourself, Rághava, must go at once to my father and tell him, lest in his wrath he consume you as a raging fire consumes a forest. There is the footpath, your majesty, leading to my father's 57.35
ashram. Go and beg his forgiveness, lest he curse you in his rage. Draw out the arrow from me, your majesty, the keen-edged shaft is tearing me apart at the quick, as a rushing water current tears a soft riverbank apart. I am not a *brahman*, your majesty, set your mind at ease. For I was born of a *vaishya* father and a *shudra* mother, lord of the country.'

So he spoke, in pain, and as he lay doubled over, I pulled out the arrow from where it pierced him to the quick. I stared at him lying there by the Sárayu, his body drenched in water, as he painfully lamented, all the while gasping from his mortal wound; and as I stared, my dear wife, I grew utterly sick at heart."

"It was a great sin I had committed, however unintentionally, I hardly had my wits about me as all alone I put my mind to the question of how might it be righted. At last I took the pot filled with pure water and went along the path he had told me of, until I reached the ashram. There I saw his parents, a frail, blind old couple with no one to guide them, like a pair of birds whose wings have been clipped. They could not move about and were sitting 58.1

tām āśāṃ mat|kṛte hīnāv udāsīnāv a|nāthavat.
Pada|śabdaṃ tu me śrutvā munir vākyam abhāṣata:
‹kiṃ cirāyasi me putra? pān' îyaṃ kṣipram ānaya.
Yan|nimittam idaṃ tāta salile krīḍitaṃ tvayā
utkaṇṭhitā te māt" êyaṃ praviśa kṣipram āśramam.
Yad vyalīkaṃ kṛtaṃ putra mātrā te yadi vā mayā
na tan manasi kartavyaṃ tvayā tāta tapasvinā.
Tvaṃ gatis tv agatīnāṃ ca cakṣus tvaṃ hīna|cakṣuṣām
samāsaktās tvayi prāṇāḥ kiṃ cin nau n' âbhibhāṣase?›
Avyaktayā vācā tam ahaṃ sajjamānayā
hīna|vyañjanayā prekṣya bhīto bhīta iv' âbruvam.
Manasaḥ karma ceṣṭābhir abhisaṃstabhya vāg|balam
ācacakṣe tv ahaṃ tasmai putra|vyasanajaṃ bhayam.
‹kṣatriyo 'haṃ Daśaratho n' âhaṃ putro mah"|ātmanaḥ
saj|jan'|âvamataṃ duḥkham idaṃ prāptaṃ sva|karmajam.
Bhagavaṃś cāpa|hasto 'haṃ Sarayū|tīram āgataḥ
jighāṃsuḥ śvāpadaṃ kiṃ cin nipāne v" āgataṃ gajam.
Tatra śruto mayā śabdo jale kumbhasya pūryataḥ
dvipo 'yam iti matvā hi bāṇen' âbhihato mayā.
Gatvā nadyās tatas tīram apaśyam iṣuṇā hṛdi
vinirbhinnaṃ gata|prāṇaṃ śayānaṃ bhuvi tāpasaṃ.
Bhagavañ śabdam ālakṣya mayā gaja|jighāṃsunā
visṛṣṭo 'mbhasi nārācas tena te nihataḥ sutaḥ.
Sa c' ôddhṛtena bāṇena tatr' âiva svargam āsthitaḥ
bhagavantāv ubhau śocann andhāv iti vilapya ca.

there listless and helpless, talking about him, their one hope that I robbed them of.

Hearing the sound of my footsteps the sage spoke: 'Why did you take so long, my son? Bring the water at once. Your mother here was worried, my child, and all because you were playing in the water. Come into the ashram at once. If perhaps your mother or I have offended you in some way, my son, you should not take it to heart. For you are an ascetic, my child. You are the recourse for us who have no other, the eyes for us whose sight is gone. Our very lives are in your hands. Won't you say something to us?' 58.5

The longer I looked at the sage, the more frightened I became, and in a choked voice, stammering and slurring the syllables, I spoke to him. With effort I managed to collect my thoughts and recover the power of speech. Then I began to tell him the frightful story of their son's calamity. 'I am Dasha·ratha, a *kshátriya*, not the great one's son. A sorrowful thing, which all good men would condemn, has happened by my own doing. Holy one, I came to the bank of the Sárayu, bow in hand, eager to kill some animal, an elephant perhaps, coming down to the water hole. There I heard the sound of a pitcher being filled in the water and, thinking it an elephant, I shot an arrow at it. I went to the riverbank and there I saw an ascetic lying on the ground with an arrow piercing his heart and his life ebbing away. Holy one, I was aiming at a sound, meaning to kill an elephant. I released the iron shaft toward the water, and it struck your son. When the arrow was pulled out he went to heaven, then and there, grieving for both of you holy ones, lamenting your blindness. It was unintentional, holy one, it was an 58.10 58.15

Ajñānād bhavataḥ putraḥ sahas" âbhihato mayā
śeṣam evaṃ|gate yat syāt tat prasīdatu me muniḥ!›

Sa tac chrutvā vacaḥ krūraṃ niḥśvasañ śoka|karśitaḥ
mām uvāca mahā|tejāḥ kṛt'|âñjalim upasthitam.
‹yady etad a|śubhaṃ karma na sma me kathayeḥ svayam
phalen mūrdhā sma te rājan sadyaḥ śata|sahasradhā.
58.20 Kṣatriyeṇa vadho rājan vānaprasthe viśeṣataḥ
jñāna|pūrvaṃ kṛtaḥ sthānāc cyāvayed api vajriṇam.
Ajñānādd hi kṛtaṃ yasmād idaṃ ten' âiva jīvasi
api hy adya kulaṃ na syād Rāghavāṇāṃ kuto bhavān.
Naya nau nṛpa taṃ deśam iti› māṃ c' âbhyabhāṣata
‹adya taṃ draṣṭum icchāvaḥ putraṃ paścima|darśanam.
Rudhireṇ' âvasit'|âṅgaṃ prakīrṇ'|âjina|vāsasaṃ
śayānaṃ bhuvi niḥsaṃjñaṃ dharma|rāja|vaśaṃ gatam.›
Ath' âham ekas taṃ deśaṃ nītvā tau bhṛśa|duḥkhitau
asparśayam ahaṃ putraṃ taṃ muniṃ saha bhāryayā.
58.25 Tau putram ātmanaḥ spṛṣṭvā tam āsādya tapasvinau
nipetatuḥ śarīre 'sya pitā c' âsy' êdam abravīt:
‹na nv ahaṃ te priyaḥ putra? mātaraṃ paśya dhārmika
kiṃ nu n' āliṅgase putra? sukumāra vaco vada.
Kasya v" âpara|rātre 'haṃ śroṣyāmi hṛdayaṃ|gamam
adhīyānasya madhuraṃ śāstraṃ vānyad viśeṣataḥ?
Ko māṃ saṃdhyām upāsy' âiva snātvā huta|hut'âśanaḥ
ślāghayiṣyaty upāsīnaḥ putra|śoka|bhay'|ârditam?

accident that I struck down your son. Whatever awaits me now may the sage forgive me!'

The mighty sage gasped when he heard these harrowing words, and broken with grief he spoke to me as I stood before him, hands cupped in reverence. 'If you had not told me yourself of this impious deed, your majesty, your head would have instantly burst into a myriad fragments. If 58.20
a *kshátriya* intentionally commits a murder—and the murder of a forest hermit at that—it topples him from his place, be he Indra himself, the of the thunderbolt. But since this act was unintentional, and for that reason alone, you shall live. Were it not so, the entire House of the Rághavas, not just you, would cease at once to be. Take us, your majesty, to the place,' he said to me. 'We want to see our son now, to have one last sight of him, his body spattered with blood and his hide garments in disarray, lying on the ground unconscious, under the sway of the King of Righteousness.' So all alone I led the sage and his wife to that place, and brought the deeply grieving parents near to where they could touch their son.

The wretched couple drew close, they touched their son 58.25
and collapsed upon his body. And his father cried out: 'My son, don't you love me anymore? At least have regard for your mother, then, righteous child. Why don't you embrace me, my son? Speak to me, my tender child. Whom shall I hear late at night—how it used to touch my heart—so sweetly reciting the sacred texts or other works? And after the twilight worship, the ritual bath and offerings to the sacred fire, who will sit down beside me, my son, to allay the grief and fear that anguish me? Who will bring me tubers

Kanda|mūla|phalaṃ hṛtvā ko māṃ priyam iv' âtithim
bhojayiṣyaty a|karmaṇyam a|pragraham a|nāyakam?
Imām andhāṃ ca vṛddhāṃ ca mātaraṃ te tapasvinīm
kathaṃ putra bhariṣyāmi kṛpaṇāṃ putra|gardhinīm?
Tiṣṭha! mā mā gamaḥ putra yamasya sadanaṃ prati!
śvo mayā saha gantāsi jananyā ca samedhitaḥ.
Ubhāv api ca śok'|ārtāv a|nāthau kṛpaṇau vane
kṣipram eva gamiṣyāvas tvayā hīnau yama|kṣayam.
Tato Vaivasvataṃ dṛṣṭvā taṃ pravakṣyāmi bhāratīm:
«kṣamatāṃ dharma|rājo me bibhṛyāt pitarāv ayam.»
‹a|pāpo 'si yathā putra nihataḥ pāpa|karmaṇā
tena satyena gacch' āśu ye lokāḥ śastra|yodhinām.
Yānti śūrā gatiṃ yāṃ ca saṃgrāmeṣv anivartinaḥ
hatās tv abhimukhāḥ putra gatiṃ tāṃ paramāṃ vraja.
Yāṃ gatiṃ Sagaraḥ Śaibyo Dilīpo Janamejayaḥ
Nahuṣo Dhundhumāraś ca prāptās tāṃ gaccha putraka.
Yā gatiḥ sarva|sādhūnāṃ svādhyāyāt tapasaś ca yā
bhūmidasy' āhit'|âgneś ca eka|patnī|vratasya ca.
Go|sahasra|pradātṝṇāṃ yā yā guru|bhṛtām api
deha|nyāsa|kṛtāṃ yā ca tāṃ gatiṃ gaccha putraka
na hi tv asmin kule jāto gacchaty a|kuśalāṃ gatim.›
Evaṃ sa kṛpaṇaṃ tatra paryadevayat' âsakṛt
tato 'smai kartum udakaṃ pravṛttaḥ saha bhāryayā.
Sa tu divyena rūpeṇa muni|putraḥ sva|karmabhiḥ
āśvāsya ca muhūrtaṃ tu pitarau vākyam abravīt:

and fruit and roots, and feed me like a welcome guest—
me an invalid, without leader or guide? And how, my son, 58.30
shall I support your poor mother, blind and aged as she is,
wretched and yearning for her son? Stay! Don't, oh don't go,
my son, to the abode of Yama. You may go tomorrow, with
your mother and me to lend you strength. For we too shall
soon be going to the house of Yama, bereft of you and left
helpless in the forest, wretched and anguished with grief.
And then, when I see Vaivásvata, I will make this speech:
"May the King of Righteousness forgive me, but this boy is
needed to support his parents."

'You were free of evil, my son, and were struck down by
a man of evil deeds. By the power of this truth may you
go straight to the worlds they win who fight under arms.
Proceed to the supreme state those heroes reach, my son, 58.35
who do not turn their backs in battle but die facing the foe.
Go, my dear son, to the state attained by Ságara, by Shaibya,
Dilípa, Janam·ejaya, Náhusha and Dhundhu·mara. Go, my
dear son, to the state awarded to all holy men for their Vedic
study and austerities, to one who donates land, who keeps
the sacred fires, who is faithful to his one wife; to those who
make a gift of a thousand cows, who support their *guru*s,
who lay their bodies down. For no child of this family ever
goes to the state of the accursed.'

So he mourned there, wretchedly and without pause, and
then with his wife he set about making the funeral libation
for his child. But just then the sage's son appeared in a 58.40
heavenly form procured by his own good deeds, and for
one brief moment he addressed these words of solace to his
parents:

‹sthānam asmi mahat prāpto bhavatoḥ paricāraṇāt
bhavantāv api ca kṣipraṃ mama mūlam upaiṣyataḥ.›
Evam uktvā tu divyena vimānena vapuṣmatā
āruroha divaṃ kṣipraṃ muni|putro jit'|êndriyaḥ.
Sa kṛtvā tūdakaṃ tūrṇaṃ tāpasaḥ saha bhāryayā
mām uvāca mahā|tejāḥ kṛt'|âñjalim upasthitam:
‹ady' âiva jahi māṃ rājan maraṇe n' âsti me vyathā
yac chareṇ' âika|putraṃ māṃ tvam akārṣīr a|putrakam.
58.45 Tvayā tu yad a|vijñānān nihato me sutaḥ śuciḥ
tena tvām abhiśapsyāmi suduḥkham atidāruṇam:
Putra|vyasanajaṃ duḥkhaṃ yad etan mama sāmpratam
evaṃ tvaṃ putra|śokena rājan kālaṃ kariṣyasi.›
Tasmān mām āgataṃ bhadre tasy' ôdārasya tad|vacaḥ
yad ahaṃ putra|śokena saṃtyakṣyāmy adya jīvitam.
Yadi māṃ saṃspṛśed Rāmaḥ sakṛd ady' ālapeta vā
na tan me sadṛśaṃ devi yan mayā Rāghave kṛtam.
Cakṣuṣā tvāṃ na paśyāmi smṛtir mama vilupyate
dūtā Vaivasvatasy' âite Kausalye tvarayanti mām!
58.50 Atas tu kiṃ duḥkhataraṃ yad ahaṃ jīvita|kṣaye
na hi paśyāmi dharmajñaṃ Rāmaṃ satya|parākramam.
Na te manuṣyā devās te ye cāru śubha|kuṇḍalam
mukhaṃ drakṣyanti Rāmasya varṣe pañca|daśe punaḥ.
Padma|patr'|ēkṣaṇaṃ subhru sudaṃṣṭraṃ cāru|nāsikam:
dhanyā drakṣyanti Rāmasya tār"|âdhipa|nibhaṃ mukham.
Sadṛśaṃ śāradasy' êndoḥ phullasya kamalasya ca

'I have attained a high station because I took care of you. And both of you shall soon come into my presence.' With this, the sage's disciplined son ascended straightway to heaven upon a heavenly chariot of wonderful construction. The ascetic and his wife hurriedly made the libation, and as I stood before him, my hands cupped in reverence, the mighty sage said to me:

'Slay me this very moment, your majesty; dying holds no terror for me. For I had but one son and you have taken him from me with your arrow. Since it was unintentionally 58.45
that you struck down my pure son, I will only lay a curse on you, though it is a grievous and very dreadful one: Just as I now sorrow over my son's calamity, so you, too, your majesty, shall end your days grieving for a son.'

The words of the noble sage have thus come home to me, dear wife, for now I am to lose my life grieving for my son. If only Rama could touch me or speak to me now just once. How unlike me it was, my lady, to do what I did to Rághava. I cannot see you with my eyes, Kausálya, my mind is failing. Here, the messengers of Vaivásvata are
here, hastening me on! What greater sorrow than this, that 58.50
in the final moments of my life I cannot rest my eyes on righteous, truthful Rama. They are not men, they are gods who in the fifteenth year will see Rama's face again, that lovely face with flashing earrings. His eyes like lotus petals, his perfect brows, his perfect teeth and lovely nose: how fortunate the men who will see Rama's face, so like the lord of stars, the moon. Like the autumn moon or a full-blown lotus, and so fragrant: how fortunate the men who will see the face of my defender. When Rama has ended his stay in

sugandhi mama nāthasya: dhanyā drakṣyanti tan|mukham.
Nivṛtta|vana|vāsaṃ tam Ayodhyāṃ punar āgatam
drakṣyanti sukhino Rāmaṃ Śukraṃ mārga|gataṃ yathā.
58.55 Ayam ātma|bhavaḥ śoko mām a|nātham a|cetanam
saṃsādayati vegena yathā kūlaṃ nadī|rayaḥ.
Hā Rāghava mahā|bāho hā mam' āyāsa|nāśana!»
rājā Daśarathaḥ śocañ jīvit'|ântam upāgamat.
Tathā tu dīnaṃ kathayan nar'|âdhipaḥ
priyasya putrasya vivāsan'|āturaḥ
gate 'rdha|rātre bhṛśa|duḥkha|pīḍitas
tadā jahau prāṇam udāra|darśanaḥ.

the forest and returns to Ayódhya, what happiness for those who will see him, like the planet Shukra moving forward on its course. The grief arising here in my very soul has left me helpless and insensible. In its wild rush it is sweeping me away, as a raging river sweeps away its bank. 58.55

Oh great-armed Rághava, the one relief of my agony!" With this last cry of grief King Dasha·ratha reached the end of his life. And so it came about, just after midnight, when he had finished his mournful tale, that the lord of men, a man of noble vision, anguished by the exile of his beloved son and afflicted with the most profound sorrow, breathed his last. 58.57

59–68
BHÁRATA RETURNS

59.1 Atha rātryāṃ vyatītāyāṃ prātar ev' âpare 'hani
bandinaḥ paryupātiṣṭhaṃs tat pārthiva|niveśanam.
Tataḥ śuci|samācārāḥ paryupasthāna|kovidaḥ
strī|varṣavara|bhūyiṣṭhā upatasthur yathā|puram.
Hari|candana|saṃpṛktam udakaṃ kāñcanair ghaṭaiḥ
āninyuḥ snāna|śikṣājñā yathā|kālaṃ yathā|vidhi.
Maṅgal'|ālambhanīyāni prāśanīyān upaskarān
upaninyus tath" âpy anyāḥ kumārī bahulāḥ striyaḥ.
59.5 Atha yāḥ Kosal'|êndrasya śayanaṃ pratyanantarāḥ
tāḥ striyas tu samāgamya bhartāraṃ pratyabodhayan.
Tā vepathu|parītāś ca rājñaḥ prāṇeṣu śaṅkitāḥ
pratisrotas tṛṇ'|âgrāṇāṃ sadṛśaṃ saṃcakampire.
Atha saṃvepamanānāṃ strīṇāṃ dṛṣṭvā ca pārthivam
yat tad āśaṅkitaṃ pāpaṃ tasya jajñe viniścayaḥ.

Tataḥ pracukruśur dīnāḥ sa|svaraṃ tā var'|âṅganāḥ
kareṇava iv' âraṇye sthāna|pracyuta|yūthapāḥ.
Tāsām ākranda|śabdena sahas" ôdgata|cetane
Kausalyā ca Sumitrā ca tyakta|nidre babhūvatuḥ.
59.10 Kausalyā ca Sumitrā ca dṛṣṭvā spṛṣṭvā ca pārthivam:
«hā nāth' êti» parikruśya petatur dharaṇī|tale.
Sā Kosal'|êndra|duhitā veṣṭamānā mahī|tale
na babhrāja rajo|dhvastā tār" êva gagana|cyutā.
Tat samuttrasta|saṃbhrāntaṃ paryutsuka|jan'|ākulam
sarvatas tumul'|ākrandaṃ paritāp'|ārta|bāndhavam.
Sadyo nipatit'|ānandaṃ dīna|viklava|darśanam
babhūva nara|devasya sadma diṣṭ'|ântam īyuṣaḥ.

Night passed, and next morning the panegyrists ar- 59.1
rived to attend at the bedchamber of the king. The skillful servants approached as usual, women and eunuchs mostly, people of impeccable conduct. At the proper time and according to custom the bath attendants came, bringing golden pitchers of water scented with yellow sandalwood. And a group of women appeared, young maidens for the most part, bearing auspicious articles, refreshments and accoutrements. The women then assembled who waited in 59.5
attendance on the bed of the Kósalan lord, and they went to awaken their master. They suddenly felt apprehensive about whether the king was indeed alive; a shudder convulsed them and they began to tremble like blades of grass that stand against the current. Then, as the trembling women looked more closely at the king, their apprehension of evil became a certainty.

The lovely women were desolate and sent up a shrill wail, like cow elephants in the wilderness when their bull is driven from his place. At the sound of their crying Kausálya and Sumítra awoke at once and came to their senses. Kausálya and Sumítra looked at the king and touched him. Then, crying out "O dear husband!" they collapsed upon the floor. The daughter of the lord of Kósala lay writhing upon the ground, coated with dust, her brilliance dimmed like that of a star fallen from the sky. A place of panic and bewilderment, with throngs of heartbroken people, tumult and crying everywhere, and kinsmen anguished with grief; all its bliss shattered in an instant, with a desolate and frenzied look—such was the palace of the god of men when he had 59.10

Atītam ājñāya tu pārthivaʾ|rṣabhaṃ
yaśasvinaṃ saṃparivārya patnayaḥ
bhṛśaṃ rudantyaḥ karuṇaṃ suduḥkhitāḥ
pragṛhya bāhū vyalapann a|nāthavat.

60.1 TAM AGNIM IVA saṃśāntam ambu|hīnam iv' ârṇavam
hata|prabham iv' ādityaṃ svar|gataṃ prekṣya bhūmipam.
Kausalyā bāṣpa|pūrṇ'|âkṣī dvividhaṃ śoka|karśitā
upagṛhya śiro rājñaḥ Kaikeyīṃ pratyabhāṣata:
«Sa|kāmā bhava Kaikeyi bhuṅkṣva rājyam a|kaṇṭakam
tyaktvā rājānam ek'|âgrā nṛśaṃse duṣṭa|cāriṇi?
Vihāya māṃ gato Rāmo bhartā ca svar|gato mama
vipathe sārtha|hīn" êva n' âhaṃ jīvitum utsahe.
60.5 Bhartāraṃ taṃ parityajya kā strī daivatam ātmanaḥ
icchej jīvitum anyatra Kaikeyyās tyakta|dharmaṇaḥ?
Na lubdho budhyate doṣān kiṃ pākam iva bhakṣayan
kubjā|nimittaṃ Kaikeyyā Rāghavāṇān kulaṃ hatam.
A|niyoge niyuktena rājñā Rāmaṃ vivāsitam
sa|bhāryaṃ Janakaḥ śrutvā paritapsyaty ahaṃ yathā.
Rāmaḥ kamala|patr'|âkṣo jīva|nāśam ito gataḥ!
Videha|rājasya sutā tahā Sītā tapasvinī
duḥkhasy' ânucitā duḥkhaṃ vane paryudvijiṣyati.
Nadatāṃ bhīma|ghoṣāṇāṃ niśāsu mṛga|pakṣiṇām
niśamya nūnaṃ saṃstrastā Rāghavaṃ saṃśrayiṣyati.

reached the end of his allotted span. Realizing that the glorious bull among kings had passed away, his wives gathered around him, weeping wildly and piteously in their sorrow, and stretching out their arms in helpless lamentation.

KAUSÁLYA GAZED at the dead king—he looked like a blazing fire suddenly extinguished, or the ocean emptied of water, or the sun gone dark—and her eyes filled with tears. Broken now with a double grief, she clasped the head of the king and cried out to Kaikéyi: "You should be satisfied, Kaikéyi, for now you can enjoy the kingship unchallenged. Wasn't this the one object you had in mind when you forsook the king, you vicious, wicked woman? Rama has gone away without me, and my husband has gone to heaven. I am like someone left behind by a caravan and utterly stranded. I cannot bear to live. What woman who has lost her husband, her own deity, would want to live—except Kaikéyi, who has lost the way of righteousness as well? A greedy person is oblivious to risks; he will eat even fruit that makes one sick. And thus, at the instigation of the hunchback, Kaikéyi has destroyed the House of the Rághavas. 60.1 60.5

When Jánaka learns that the king, acting on an illicit order, has exiled Rama and his wife, he will suffer just as I do. Lotus-eyed Rama has gone away dead in life! And poor Sita, too, daughter of the king of Vidéha, she who has never known hardship, will tremble all over at the hardships of the forest. At night Sita will hear the ghastly cries of birds and beasts, and will shrink back into Rama's arms in terror. Her father is aged and has but one child. He will fret over Vaidéhi. He, too, will be overpowered by grief and no doubt 60.10

60.10 Vṛddhaś c' âiv' âlpa|putraś ca Vaidehīm anucintayan
so 'pi śoka|samāviṣṭo nanu tyakṣyati jīvitam.»
Tāṃ tataḥ saṃpariṣvajya vilapantīṃ tapasvinīm
vyapaninyuḥ suduḥkh'|ārtāṃ Kausalyāṃ vyāvahārikāḥ.
Taila|droṇyām ath' âmātyāḥ saṃveśya jagatī|patim
rājñaḥ sarvāṇy ath' ādiṣṭāś cakruḥ karmāṇy anantaram.
Na tu saṃkalanaṃ rājño vinā putreṇa mantriṇaḥ
sarvajñāḥ kartum īṣus te tato rakṣanti bhūmipam.
Taila|droṇyāṃ tu sacivaiḥ śāyitaṃ taṃ nar'|âdhipam
«hā mṛto 'yam iti» jñātvā striyas tāḥ paryadevayan.
60.15 Bāhūn udyamya kṛpaṇā netra|prasravaṇair mukhaiḥ
rudantyaḥ śoka|saṃtaptāḥ kṛpaṇaṃ paryadevayan.
Niśā nakṣatra|hīn" êva strīva bhartṛ|vivarjitā
purī n' ârājat' Âyodhyā hīnā rājñā mah"|ātmanā.
Bāṣpa|paryākula|janā hā|hā|bhūta|kulāṅganā
śūnya|catvara|veśm'|ântā na babhrāja yathā|puram.
Gata|prabhā dyaur iva bhāskaraṃ vinā
vyapeta|nakṣatra|gaṇ" êva śarvarī
purī babhāse rahitā mah"|ātmanā
na c' âsra|kaṇṭh'|ākula|mārga|catvarā.
Narāś ca nāryaś ca sametya saṃghaśo
vigarhamāṇā Bharatasya mātaram
tadā nagaryāṃ nara|deva|saṃkṣaye
babhūvur ārtā na ca śarma lebhire.

61.1 Vyatītāyāṃ tu śarvaryām ādityasy' ôdaye tataḥ
sametya rāja|kartāraḥ sabhām īyur dvijātayaḥ.
Mārkaṇḍeyo 'tha Maudgalyo Vāmadevaś ca Kāśyapaḥ
Kātyayano Gautamaś ca Jābāliś ca mahā|yaśāḥ.

lose his life." As poor Kausálya lamented in the anguish of sorrow, her maid servants helped her up and led her away.

The ministers then took the lord of the world and placed him in a vat of sesame oil, and thereupon they assumed all the royal duties, as they were empowered to do. The counsellors, being prudent men, were reluctant to administer the final rites with no prince at court. And so for the meanwhile they kept watch over the lord of earth. When the women learned that the advisers had laid the lord of men in the vat of oil, they broke out in lamentation, crying "Oh he is dead!" Their faces streaming tears, weeping in their burning grief, they raised their arms up piteously and piteously lamented. Like a night without stars, like a woman bereft of her husband, the city of Ayódhya without its great king was cast into gloom. The people were drenched in tears, the housewives were crying woefully, the public squares and private courtyards were empty, and the brilliance the city once had was gone. As heaven has no light without the sun, as night has none when the crowds of stars have paled, the city went dark when it lost its great king, and sob-choked people crowded the streets and squares. Men and women had begun to gather in groups, and they denounced the mother of Bhárata. They were anguished and found no comfort in the city, now that the god of men was dead. 60.15

NIGHT PASSED, AND when the sun rose the deputies of the king, the *brahman*s, convened and went to the assembly hall. Markandéya and Maudgálya, Vama·deva and Káshyapa, Katyáyana and Gáutama and glorious Jabáli—these *brahman*s and the ministers all gave voice to their different 61.1

Ete dvijāḥ sah' âmātyaiḥ pṛthag vācam udīrayan
Vasiṣṭham ev' âbhimukhāḥ śreṣṭho rāja|purohitam.

«Atītā śarvarī duḥkhaṃ yā no varṣa|śat'|ôpamā
asmin pañcatvam āpanne putra|śokena pārthive.
Svar|gataś ca mahā|rājo Rāmaś c' âraṇyam āśritaḥ
Lakṣmaṇaś c' âpi tejasvī Rāmeṇ' âiva gataḥ saha.
Ubhau Bharata|Śatrughnau Kekayeṣu paraṃ|tapau
pure Rājagṛhe ramye mātāmaha|niveśane.
Ikṣvākūṇām ih' âdy' âiva kaś cid rājā vidhīyatām
arājakaṃ hi no rāṣṭraṃ na vināśam avāpnuyāt.
N' ârājake jana|pade vidyunmālī mahā|svanaḥ
abhivarṣati parjanyo mahīṃ divyena vāriṇā.
N' ârājake jana|pade bīja|muṣṭiḥ prakīryate
n' ârājake pituḥ putro bhāryā vā vartate vaśe.
Arājake dhanaṃ n' âsti n' âsti bhāry" âpy arājake
idam atyāhitaṃ c' ânyat kutaḥ satyam arājake?

N' ârājake jana|pade kārayanti sabhāṃ narāḥ
udyānāni ca ramyāṇi hṛṣṭāḥ puṇya|gṛhāṇi ca.
N' ârājake jana|pade yajña|śīlā dvijātayaḥ
satrāṇy anvāsate dāntā brāhmaṇāḥ saṃśita|vratāḥ.
N' ârājake jana|pade prabhūta|naṭa|nartakāḥ
utsavāś ca samājāś ca vardhante rāṣṭra|vardhanāḥ.
N' ârajake jana|pade siddh'|ârthā vyavahāriṇaḥ
kathābhir anurajyante kathā|śīlāḥ kathā|priyaiḥ.
N' ârājake jana|pade vāhanaiḥ śīghra|gāmibhiḥ
narā niryānty araṇyāni nārībhiḥ saha kāminaḥ.

opinions. But in the end they turned to Vasíshtha himself, the foremost among them, the family priest of the king.

"The night passed sorrowfully for us; like a hundred years it seemed, with our king dead of grief for his son. The great king has gone to heaven, Rama has withdrawn to the wilderness, and glorious Lákshmana has gone with him. Both Bhárata and Shatrúghna, slayers of enemies, are in the land of the Kékayas, in the lovely city of Raja·griha, the home of Bhárata's grandfather. Let some other Ikshváku prince be appointed king here and now, lest our kingdom be without a king and thereby meet with destruction. In a land without a king the rumbling lightning-wreathed clouds do not rain down their heavenly water upon the earth. In a land without a king handfuls of grain are not sown. In a land without a king no son submits to his father's will, no wife to her husband's. Where there is no king there can be no wealth; one cannot have a wife where there is no king. And there is yet further peril, for how can there be honesty where there is no king?

In a land without a king patrons take no delight in building assembly halls, lovely gardens or sanctuaries. In a land without a king the twice-born men who customarily sacrifice, the self-restrained *brahman*s rigorous in their vows, institute no sacred rites. In a land without a king no festivals or celebrationss are held, where actors and dancers come in troupes and which bring a kingdom prosperity. In a land without a king litigants receive no satisfaction, while storytellers find no favor with audiences by their stories. In a land without a king lovers and their ladies do not ride out to the countryside on swift horses.

N' ârâkaje jana|pade dhanavantaḥ surakṣitâḥ
śerate vivṛta dvârâḥ kṛṣi|gorakṣa|jîvinaḥ.
N' ârâjake jana|pade vaṇijo dûra|gâminaḥ
gacchanti kṣemam adhvânaṃ bahu|puṇya|samâcitâḥ.
N' ârâjake jana|pade caraty eka|caro vaśî
bhâvayann âtman" âtmânaṃ yatra sâyaṃ|gṛho muniḥ.
N' ârâjake jana|pade yoga|kṣemaṃ pravartate:
na c' âpy arâjake senâ śatrûn viṣahate yudhi.
61.20 Yathâ hy anudakâ nadyo yathâ v" âpy atṛṇaṃ vanam
a|gopâlâ yathâ gâvas tathâ râṣṭram arâjakam.
N' ârâjake jana|pade svakaṃ bhavati kasya cit
matsyâ iva narâ nityaṃ bhakṣayanti parasparam.
Ye hi saṃbhinna|maryâdâ nâstikâś chinna|saṃśayâḥ
te 'pi bhâvâya kalpante râja|daṇḍa|nipîḍitâḥ.
Aho tama iv' êdaṃ syân na prajñâyeta kiṃ cana
râjâ cen na bhavel loke vibhajan sâdhv|asâdhunî.
Jîvaty api mahâ|râje tav' âiva vacanaṃ vayam
n' âtikramâmahe sarve velâṃ prâpy' êva sâgaraḥ.
61.25 Sa naḥ samîkṣya dvijavarya|vṛttaṃ
nṛpaṃ vinâ râjyam araṇya|bhûtam
kumâram Ikṣvâku|sutaṃ vadânyaṃ
tvam eva râjânam ih' âbhiṣiñcaya.»

62.1 Teṣâṃ tad|vacanaṃ śrutvâ Vasiṣṭhaḥ pratyuvâca ha
mitr'|âmâtya|gaṇân sarvân brâhmaṇâṃs tân idaṃ vacaḥ:
«Yad asau mâtula|kule pure Râjagṛhe sukhî
Bharato vasati bhrâtrâ Śatrughnena samanvitaḥ.
Tac chîghraṃ javanâ dûtâ gacchantu tvaritair hayaiḥ

In a land without a king the rich who live by farming and cattle raising do not sleep securely, with their doors wide open. In a land without a king merchants travelling long distances with loads of goods for sale do not go their way in safety. In a land without a king there wander no solitary, disciplined sages, those who lodge where nightfall finds them and contemplate the Self within themselves. In a land without a king security is not maintained: without a king the army cannot withstand the enemy in battle. Like 61.20
rivers without water, like a forest without vegetation, like cows without cowherds is a kingdom without a king.

In a land without a king no one can call anything his own. For men, like fish, incessantly seek to devour one another. Atheists, too, who unscrupulously break all bounds, conform to decency only when royal punishment is there to check them. Ah, it would be like darkness, nothing at all remaining clear, were there no king in the world to separate good from evil. Even while the great king was alive it was your word alone we would not overstep, as the ocean does not overstep its shore. Best of the twice-born, consider 61.25
what awaits us: without a king the kingdom will become a wilderness. Name some prince of the Ikshváku line and consecrate him yourself as our king."

When he had heard their speech, Vasíshtha replied to 62.1
the *brahman*s and the hosts of ministers and allies. "Bhárata is living comfortably with his brother Shatrúghna in the city of Raja·griha, among his uncle's family. So let swift messengers go at once on speeding horses and bring back the two mighty brothers. Why do we delay?" "Yes, let them go,"

ānetuṃ bhrātarau vīrau kiṃ samīkṣāmahe vayam?»
«Gacchantv iti» tataḥ sarve Vasiṣṭhaṃ vākyam abruvan
teṣāṃ tad|vacanaṃ śrutvā Vasiṣṭho vākyam abravīt:
«Ehi Siddhārtha Vijaya Jayant'|Âśoka|Nandana
śrūyatām iti|kartavyaṃ sarvān eva bravīmi vaḥ
Puraṃ Rājagṛhaṃ gatvā śīghraṃ śīghra|javair hayaiḥ
tyakta|śokair idaṃ vācyaḥ śāsanād Bharato mama:
‹purohitas tvāṃ kuśalaṃ prāha sarve ca mantriṇaḥ
tvaramāṇaś ca niryāhi kṛtyam ātyayikaṃ tvayā.›
Mā c' âsmai proṣitaṃ Rāmaṃ mā c' âsmai pitaraṃ mṛtam
bhavantaḥ śaṃsiṣur gatvā Rāghavāṇām imaṃ kṣayam.
Kauśeyāni ca vastrāṇi bhūṣaṇāni varāṇi ca
kṣipram ādāya rājñaś ca Bharatasya ca gacchata.»
Vasiṣṭhen' âbhyanujñātā dūtāḥ saṃtvaritā yayuḥ.
Te Hastinapure Gaṅgāṃ tīrtvā pratyaṅmukhā yayuḥ
Pāñcāla|deśam āsādya madhyena kuru|jāṅgalam.
Te prasann'|ôdakāṃ divyāṃ nānā|vihaga|sevitām
upātijagmur vegena Śaradaṇḍāṃ jan'|ākulām.
Nikūla|vṛkṣam āsādya divyaṃ saty'|ôpayācanam
abhigamy' âbhivādyaṃ taṃ Kuliṅgāṃ prāviśan purīm.
Abhikālaṃ tataḥ prāpya tejo|'bhibhavanāc cyutāḥ
yayur madhyena Bāhlīkān Sudāmānaṃ ca parvatam
Viṣṇoḥ Padaṃ prekṣamāṇā Vipāśāṃ c' âpi Śālmalīm.
Te śrānta|vāhanā dūtā vikṛṣṭena satā pathā
Girivrajaṃ pura|varaṃ śīghram āsedur añjasā.
Bhartuḥ priy'|ârthaṃ kula|rakṣaṇ'|ârthaṃ
bhartuś ca vaṃśasya parigrah'|ârtham
aheḍamānās tvarayā sma dūtā
rātryāṃ tu te tat puram eva yātāḥ.

they all replied, and when Vasíshtha heard their response, he said: "Come, Siddhártha, Víjaya, Jayánta, Ashóka, Nándana. Listen, I shall tell you all what must be done. Take swift horses and swiftly proceed to the city of Raja·griha. You must keep your grief in check and tell Bhárata the following on my authority: 'The family priest asks after your health, as do all the counsellors. Please hurry back, for there is urgent business to which you must attend.' But do not go and tell him of this disaster that has befallen the Rághavas, do not tell him of Rama's exile or the death of the king. Take silk garments and choice ornaments as gifts for the king and Bhárata, and depart at once." Vasíshtha dismissed the messengers and they hurried off.

They crossed the Ganges at Hástina·pura after reaching the country of Pañchála, and headed west, cutting through the middle of the Kuru jungle. They swiftly forded the Shara·danda, a heavenly river running with clear water, the home of birds of every description and thronged with people. They reached the venerable tree on the western bank, the heavenly Granter of Wishes, and after approaching it they entered the city of Kulínga. From there they arrived at Abhikála, passing on from Tejo·bhibhávana, and proceeding by way of central Bahlíka they made their way to Mount Sudámana. Soon the Foot of Vishnu came into view, and the Vipásha and Shálmali rivers. The road was long and their mounts exhausted, but the messengers pressed on with all haste to Giri·vraja, best of cities. To bring their master the news, to ensure the safety of their master's House and his succession in the dynasty, the messengers wasted no time but hurried on and reached the city late in the night.

63.1 YĀM EVA RĀTRIṂ te dūtāḥ praviśanti sma tāṃ purīm
Bharaten' âpi tāṃ rātriṃ svapno dṛṣṭo 'yam apriyaḥ.
Vyuṣṭām eva tu tāṃ rātriṃ dṛṣṭvā taṃ svapnam apriyam
putro rāj'|âdhirājasya subhṛśaṃ paryatapyata.
Tapyamānaṃ samājñāya vayasyāḥ priya|vādinaḥ
āyāsaṃ hi vineṣyantaḥ sabhāyāṃ cakrire kathāḥ.
Vādayanti tathā gānti lāsayanty api c' âpare
nāṭakāny apare prāhur hāsyāni vividhāni ca.
63.5 Sa tair mah"|ātmā Bharataḥ sakhibhiḥ priya|vādibhiḥ
goṣṭhī|hāsyāni kurvadbhir na prāhṛṣyata Rāghavaḥ.
Tam abravīt priya|sakho Bharataṃ sakhibhir vṛtam:
«suhṛdbhiḥ paryupāsīnaḥ kiṃ sakhe n' ânumodase?»
Evaṃ bruvāṇaṃ suhṛdaṃ Bharataḥ pratyuvāca ha:
«śṛṇu tvaṃ yan|nimittaṃ me dainyam etad upāgatam.
Svapne pitaram adrākṣaṃ malinaṃ mukta|mūrdhajam
patantam adri|śikharāt kaluṣe gomaye hrade.
Plavamānaś ca me dṛṣṭaḥ sa tasmin gomaya|hrade
pibann añjalinā tailaṃ hasann iva muhur muhuḥ.
63.10 Tatas tilodanaṃ bhuktvā punaḥ punar adhaḥ|śirāḥ
tailen' âbhyakta|sarv'|âṅgas tailam ev' âvagāhata.
Svapne 'pi sāgaraṃ śuṣkaṃ candraṃ ca patitaṃ bhuvi
sahasā c' âpi saṃśantaṃ jvalitaṃ jātavedasaṃ.
Avadīrṇāṃ ca pṛthivīṃ śuṣkāṃś ca vividhān drumān
ahaṃ paśyāmi vidhvastān sadhūmāṃś c' âiva pārvatān.
Pīṭhe kārṣṇ'|āyase c' âinaṃ niṣaṇṇaṃ kṛṣṇa|vāsasaṃ
prahasanti sma rājānaṃ pramadāḥ kṛṣṇa|piṅgalāḥ.
Tvaramāṇaś ca dharm'|ātmā rakta|māly'|ânulepanaḥ
rathena khara|yuktena prayāto dakṣiṇā|mukhaḥ.

Now, the very night the messengers were making their 63.1
way into the city, Bhárata had a terrible dream. The son
of the king of kings had this terrible dream just as night
was ending, and it sorely troubled him. Observing how
troubled he was, his affable companions tried to ease his
distress by engaging him in conversation in the assembly
hall. Some made music and sang, while others danced or
staged dramatic pieces or told various kinds of jokes. But 63.5
great Bhárata Rághava took no delight in the conviviality of
his affable friends. One close friend questioned Bhárata as
he sat in the midst of his friends: "Why are you not enjoying
yourself, my friend, in the company of your companions?"
Bhárata replied to his companion, "Listen to the reason why
great desolation has come over me.

I saw my father in a dream. He was filthy, his hair dishevelled, and he fell from a mountain peak into a foul pool of cow dung. I saw him bobbing in the pool of dung, drinking sesame oil from his cupped hands, and he seemed to be laughing all the while. Then he was eating rice and 63.10
oil, his whole body was anointed with oil, and again and
again he would plunge head first into the oil. And in the
same dream I saw the ocean gone dry and the moon fallen
onto the earth. A blazing fire was suddenly extinguished, the
earth was split open and all the trees dried up; the mountains smoked and crumbled. Then the king lay collapsed on
a black iron throne; he was dressed all in black, and there
were women mocking him, women part yellow, part black.
And a righteous man, wearing red garlands and smeared
with red cream, was hurrying off toward the south on a
chariot yoked with asses.

63.15 Evam etan mayā dṛṣṭam imāṃ rātriṃ bhay'|āvaham
ahaṃ Rāmo 'tha vā rājā Lakṣmaṇo vā mariṣyati.
Naro yānena yaḥ svapne khara|yuktena yāti hi
acirāt tasya dhūm'|âgraṃ citāyāṃ saṃpradṛśyate
etan|nimittaṃ dīno 'haṃ tan na vaḥ pratipūjaye. Śuṣyatīva
ca me kaṇṭho na svastham iva me manaḥ
jugupsann iva c' ātmānaṃ na ca paśyāmi kāraṇam.
Imāṃ hi duḥsvapna|gatiṃ niśāmya tām
aneka|rūpām avitarkitāṃ purā
bhayaṃ mahat tadd hṛdayān na yāti me
vicintya rājānam acintya|darśanam.»

64.1 Bharate bruvati svapnaṃ dūtās te klānta|vāhanāḥ
praviśy' âsahya|parikhaṃ ramyaṃ Rājagṛhaṃ puram.
Samāgamya tu rājñā ca rāja|putreṇa c' ârcitāḥ
rājñaḥ pādau gṛhītvā tu tam ūcur Bharataṃ vacaḥ:
«Purohitas tvā kuśalaṃ prāha sarve ca mantriṇaḥ
tvaramāṇaś ca niryāhi kṛtyam ātyayikaṃ tvayā.
Atra viṃśati|koṭyas tu nṛ|pater mātulasya te
daśa|koṭyas tu saṃpūrṇās tath" âiva ca nṛp'|ātmaja.»
64.5 Pratigṛhya ca tat sarvaṃ svanuraktaḥ suhṛj|jane
dūtān uvāca Bharataḥ kāmaiḥ saṃpratipūjya tān:
«Kaccit sukuśalī rājā pitā Daśaratho mama?
kaccic cār'|āgatā Rāme Lakṣmaṇe vā mah"|ātmani?
Āryā ca dharma|niratā dharmajñā dharma|darśinī
arogā c' âpi Kausalyā mātā Rāmasya dhīmataḥ?

This was the terrifying dream I had last night. Surely I 63.15
myself, or Rama, or the king, or Lákshmana is going to die. For when in a dream a man sets out in a carriage yoked with asses, it is not long before a wreath of smoke appears above his funeral pyre. It is because of this I am so desolate and do not respond to your courtesies. My throat feels as if it were drying up; I can find no peace of mind. I feel a loathing for myself and do not know the reason why. Observing the course of this nightmare, with all those images that never before had entered my mind, and thinking about the king and that unthinkable look he had, I am filled with a great fear, and it will not leave my heart."

As Bhárata was telling his dream, the messengers on 64.1
their weary mounts entered the lovely city of Raja·griha with its unbreachable defenses. They met with the king and the king's son and were received with honor. Then, clasping the feet of the king, they spoke these words to Bhárata: "The family priest asks after your health, as do all the counsellors. Please hurry back, for there is urgent business to which you must attend. Here is a gift for the king worth two hundred million, great prince, and one for your uncle worth a full hundred million."

Bhárata accepted it all and in return honored the mes- 64.5
sengers with all that they might desire. He then asked, out of deep loyalty to his loved ones: "My father, King Dasha·ratha, fares well, I hope? Rama and great Lákshmana are in good health? And noble Kausálya, too, wise Rama's mother, who is earnest in righteousness, who knows the way of righteousness and ever looks to it? My middle mother Sumítra,

Kaccit Sumitrā dharmajñā jananī Lakṣmaṇasya yā
Śatrughnasya ca vīrasya s" ârogā c' âpi madhyamā?
Ātma|kāmā sadā caṇḍī krodhanā prājña|māninī
arogā c' âpi Kaikeyī mātā me kim uvāca ha?»
Evam uktās tu te dūtā Bharatena mah"|ātmanā
ūcuḥ saṃpraśritaṃ vākyam idaṃ taṃ Bharataṃ tadā:
«kuśalās te nara|vyāghra yeṣāṃ kuśalam icchasi.»

Bharataś c' âpi tān dūtān evam ukto 'bhyabhāṣata:
«āpṛcche 'haṃ mahā|rājaṃ dūtāḥ saṃtvarayanti mām.»
Evam uktvā tu tān dūtān Bharataḥ pārthiv'|ātmajaḥ
dūtaiḥ saṃcodito vākyaṃ mātāmaham uvāca ha:
«Rājan pitur gamiṣyāmi sakāśaṃ dūta|coditaḥ
punar apy aham eṣyāmi yadā me tvaṃ smariṣyasi.»
Bharaten' âivam uktas tu nṛpo mātāmahas tadā
tam uvāca śubhaṃ vākyaṃ śirasy āghrāya Rāghavam:
«Gaccha tāt' ânujāne tvāṃ Kaikeyī suprajās tvayā
mātaraṃ kuśalaṃ brūyāḥ pitaraṃ ca paraṃ|tapa.
Purohitaṃ ca kuśalaṃ ye c' ânye dvija|sattamāḥ
tau ca tāta maheṣvāsau bhrātaru Rāma|Lakṣmaṇau.»

Tasmai hasty|uttamāṃś citrān kambalān ajināni ca
abhisatkṛtya Kaikeyo Bharatāya dhanaṃ dadau.
Rukma|niṣka|sahasre dve ṣoḍaś'|âśva|śatāni ca
sat|kṛtya Kaikayī|putraṃ Kekayo dhanam ādiśat.
Tath" âmātyān abhipretān viśvāsyāṃś ca guṇ'|ânvitān
dadāv Aśvapatiḥ śīghraṃ Bharatāy' ânuyāyinaḥ.
Airāvatān Aindra|śirān nāgān vai priya|darśanān
kharāñ śīghrān susaṃyuktān mātulo 'smai dhanaṃ dadau.

who knows the way of righteousness, the mother of Lákshmana and mighty Shatrúghna, she is in good health, I hope? And Kaikéyi, too, my ever selfish, hot-tempered and irascible mother, who fancies herself so wise?" So great Bhárata spoke, and the messengers most diffidently replied, "All fare well, tiger among men, whose welfare you desire."

At this, Bhárata addressed the messengers: "I will ask leave of the great king, telling him the messengers are pressing me to hurry." After speaking with the messengers and at their urging, prince Bhárata addressed his grandfather: "Your majesty, I must return to my father at the urging of the messengers. But I shall come back again whenever you may wish me to do so." So Bhárata Rághava spoke, and his grandfather the king kissed him on the forehead and addressed him with these heartfelt words: "Go, my child, I give you leave. Kaikéyi has a worthy son in you. Give your mother my best wishes, slayer of enemies, and your father. My best wishes also to the family priest, my child, and to the other chief *brahman*s and those two great bowmen, your brothers Rama and Lákshmana."

The king of Kékaya honored Bhárata with the gift of prize elephants, many-colored blankets and hides, and gave him riches. Two thousand gold ornaments and sixteen hundred horses were the riches he bestowed to honor the son of Kaikéyi. And straightway Ashva·pati presented Bhárata with his ministers as travel companions, estimable men, trustworthy and virtuous. His uncle gave him riches too: handsome elephants bred on Mount Irávata and Mount Indra·shira, and swift asses that easily took the yoke. He made him a present of dogs raised in the inner chamber, huge dogs

Antaḥ|pure 'tisaṃvṛddhān vyāghra|vīrya|bal'|ânvitān
daṃṣṭr"|āyudhān mahā|kāyāñ śunaś c' ôpāyanaṃ dadau.
Sa mātāmaham āpṛcchya mātulaṃ ca Yudhājitam
ratham āruhya Bharataḥ Śatrughna|sahito yayau.
Rathān maṇḍala|cakrāṃś ca yojayitvā paraḥ|śatam
uṣṭra|go|'śva|kharair bhṛtyā Bharataṃ yāntam anvayuḥ.
Balena gupto Bharato mah"|ātmā
    sah' āryakasy' ātma|samair amātyaiḥ
ādāya Śatrughnam apeta|śatrur
    gṛhād yayau siddha iv' êndra|lokāt.

65.1 Sa prāṅ|mukho Rājagṛhād abhiniryāya vīryavān
hrādinīṃ dūra|pārāṃ ca pratyak|srotas taraṅgiṇīm
Śatadrūm atarac chrīmān nadīm Ikṣvāku|nandanaḥ.
Eladhāne nadīṃ tīrtvā prāpya c' Âparaparpaṭān
«śilām ākurvatīṃ» tīrtvā āgneyaṃ Śalyakartanam.
Satya|saṃdhaḥ śuciḥ śrīmān prekṣamāṇaḥ Śilāvahām
atyayāt sa mahā|śailān vanaṃ Caitrarathaṃ prati.
Veginīṃ ca Kuliṅg"|ākhyāṃ hrādinīṃ parvat'|āvṛtām
Yamunāṃ prāpya saṃtīrṇo balam āśvāsayat tadā.
65.5 Śītī|kṛtya tu gātrāṇi klāntān āśvāsya vājinaḥ
tatra snātvā ca pītvā ca prāyād ādāya c' ôdakam.
    Rāja|putro mah"|âraṇyam an|abhīkṣṇ'|ôpasevitam
bhadro bhadreṇa yānena mārutaḥ kham iv' âtyayāt.
Toraṇaṃ dakṣiṇ'|ârdhena Jambūprastham upāgamat
Varūthaṃ ca yayau ramyaṃ grāmaṃ Daśarath'|ātmajaḥ.
Tatra ramye vane vāsaṃ kṛtv" âsau prāṅ|mukho yayau

with fangs like spears and the strength and courage of tigers. Taking leave of his grandfather and his uncle Yudhájit, Bhárata boarded his chariot with Shatrúghna and set out. And servants yoked the camels, oxen, horses and asses to the circle-wheeled chariots, more than a hundred of them, and followed in Bhárata's train. So great Bhárata set out with Shatrúghna, under the protection of an army and accompanied by the ministers whom his grandfather trusted like himself. And he left Griha untroubled by enemies, as a perfected being might leave the world of Indra.

HEADING EAST, MIGHTY Bhárata, the majestic delight of 65.1
the Ikshvákus, departed from Raja·griha and crossed the wide and westward-flowing Shatádru, a deep river capped with waves. Crossing the river at Ela·dhana, he reached Ápara·párpata, proceeding on to eastern Shalya·kártana after crossing the Shila·vaha, the "river trailing stones." The prince, honest, majestic and ever true to his word, had the river in view until he passed the high mountains leading to the Chitra·ratha forest. Crossing the Kulínga, a deep and swift river bounded by hills, he finally rested his army upon reaching the Yámuna. He rested the weary horses and cooled 64.5
their limbs. Then, having bathed and drunk, he took a store of water and set out once more.

In his handsome coach the handsome prince passed through the vast, uninhabited wilderness as the wind passes through the sky. Traversing the southern end of Tórana, the son of Dasha·ratha reached Jambu·prastha and proceeded to the pleasant village of Varútha. He spent the night there in the pleasant forest and then went on, heading eastward to

udyānam Ujjihānāyāḥ priyakā yatra pādapāḥ.
Sālāṃs tu priyakān prāpya śīghrān āsthāya vājinaḥ
anujñāpy' âtha Bharato vāhinīṃ tvarito yayau.
Vāsaṃ kṛtvā Sarvatīrthe tīrtvā c' Ôttānakāṃ nadīm
anyā nadīś ca vividhāḥ pārvatīyais turaṃgamaiḥ.
Hastipṛṣṭhakam āsādya Kuṭikām atyavartata
tatāra ca nara|vyāghro Lauhitye sa Kapīvatīm
Ekasāle Sthāṇumatīṃ Vinate Gomatīṃ nadīm.

Kaliṅganagare c' âpi prāpya sāla|vanaṃ tadā
Bharataḥ kṣipram āgacchat supariśrānta|vāhanaḥ.
Vanaṃ ca samatīty' āśu śarvaryām aruṇ'|ôdaye
Ayodhyāṃ Manunā rājñā nirmitāṃ sa dadarśa ha.
Tāṃ purīṃ puruṣa|vyāghraḥ sapta|rātr'|ôṣitaḥ pathi
Ayodhyām agrato dṛṣṭvā rathe sārathim abravīt:
«Eṣā n' âtipratītā me puny'|ôdyānā yaśasvinī
Ayodhyā dṛśyate dūrāt sārathe pāṇḍu|mṛttikā.
Yajvabhir guṇa|saṃpannair brāhmaṇair veda|pāragaiḥ
bhūyiṣṭham ṛddhair ākīrṇā rāja|ṛṣi|vara|pālitā.
Ayodhyāyāṃ purā śabdaḥ śrūyate tumulo mahān
samantān nara|nārīṇāṃ tam adya na śṛṇomy aham.
Udyānāni hi sāy'|âhne krīḍitv'|ôparatair naraiḥ
samantād vipradhāvadbhiḥ prakāśante mam' ânyadā.
Tāny ady' ânurudantīva parityaktāni kāmibhiḥ
araṇya|bhūt" êva purī sārathe pratibhāti me.
Na hy atra yānair dṛśyante na gajair na ca vājibhiḥ
niryānto v" âbhiyānto vā nara|mukhyā yathā|puram.
Aniṣṭāni ca pāpāni paśyāmi vividhāni ca
nimittāny a|manojñāni tena sīdati te manaḥ.»

the garden of Ujjihána, thick with *príyaka* trees. But when he reached the *príyaka* trees, Bhárata took leave of the army, and, harnessing swift horses, he sped onward. He spent the night at Sarva·tirtha, and after crossing the Uttánaka and several other rivers on his mountain-bred horses, he arrived at Hasti·príshthaka, where he forded the Kútika. At Lauhítya the tiger among men crossed the Kapívati River, at Eka·sala the Sthánumati, and the Gómati at Vínata.

At Kalínga·nágara, Bhárata reached the forest of *sala* trees and drove on swiftly though his mounts were near exhaustion. He passed straight through the forest at night and at sunrise set eyes on Ayódhya, the city King Manu built. The tiger among men had spent seven nights on the road, and at last he saw before him the city of Ayódhya. From within the chariot he addressed his charioteer: "There is Ayódhya in the distance, that glorious white-clay city with its blessed gardens, throngs of virtuous sacrificers, *brahman*s who are masters of the Vedas, and prosperous subjects, all under the protection of the best of royal seers—but how unhappy it looks to me, charioteer. In the past one used to hear a loud, tumultuous sound in Ayódhya, of men and women all about, but I do not hear it now. At other times all the gardens revealed men leaving off the sports they had played since dusk and hurrying home. But now, abandoned by the lovers, the gardens seem to be weeping. It looks to me as if the town has become a wilderness, charioteer. Prominent men are no longer to be seen, as in the past, going in and out on carriages, elephants and horses. And I see various portents, ominous ones, evil and appalling, and my heart sinks at the sight."

Dvāreṇa vaijayantena prāviśac chrānta|vāhanaḥ
dvāḥsthair utthāya «vijayaṃ!» pṛṣṭas taiḥ sahito yayau.
Sa tv anek'|âgra|hṛdayo dvāḥsthaṃ pratyarcya taṃ janam
sūtam Aśvapateḥ klāntam abravīt tatra Rāghavaḥ:
«Śrutā no yādṛśāḥ pūrvaṃ nṛ|patīnāṃ vināśane
ākārās tān ahaṃ sarvān iha paśyāmi sārathe.
65.25 Malinaṃ c' âśru|pūrṇ'|âkṣaṃ dīnaṃ dhyāna|paraṃ kṛśam
sa|strī|puṃsaṃ ca paśyāmi janam utkaṇṭhitaṃ pure.»
Ity evam uktvā Bharataḥ sūtaṃ taṃ dīna|mānasaḥ
tāny aniṣṭāny Ayodhyāyāṃ prekṣya Rājagṛhaṃ yayau.
Tāṃ śūnya|śṛṅgāṭaka|veśma|rathyāṃ
rajo|'ruṇa|dvāra|kapāṭa|yantrām
dṛṣṭvā purīm indra|purī|prakāśāṃ
duḥkhena saṃpūrṇataro babhūva.
Bahūni paśyan manaso 'priyāṇi
yāny anyadā n' âsya pure babhūvuḥ
avāk|śirā dīna|manā na hṛṣṭaḥ
pitur mah"|ātmā praviveśa veśma.

66.1 APAŚYAṂS TU TATAS tatra pitaraṃ pitur ālaye
jagāma Bharato draṣṭuṃ mātaraṃ mātur ālaye.
Anuprāptaṃ tu taṃ dṛṣṭvā Kaikeyī proṣitaṃ sutam
utpapāta tadā hṛṣṭā tyaktvā sauvarṇam āsanam.
Sa praviśy' âiva dharm'|ātmā sva|gṛhaṃ śrī|vivarjitam
Bharataḥ prekṣya jagrāha jananyāś caraṇau śubhau.
Taṃ mūrdhni samupāghrāya pariṣvajya yaśasvinam
aṅke Bharatam āropya praṣṭuṃ samupacakrame:
66.5 «Adya te kati cid rātryaś cyutasy' āryaka|veśmanaḥ?

He entered by the Gate of Victory, his horses exhausted. The gatekeepers rose and with cries of "Long live the king!" accompanied him in. In bewilderment Rághava returned the gatekeepers' greeting, and then addressed Ashva·pati's weary charioteer: "We have heard how people looked in times past when they lost their king—and I see those looks here, charioteer, I see them all. The people I see in the 65.25
town, men and women both, are unkempt, their eyes are filled with tears and they have a desolate look, haggard, forlorn and pensive." So speaking to the charioteer, Bhárata proceeded to the palace, heartsick at the ominous sights in Ayódhya. As he gazed at the city that once looked like Indra's city—at the empty crossroads, streets and houses, at the bars on the door-leaves red with dust—he was filled to overflowing with sorrow. There were so many things he saw that troubled his heart, things he had never before met with in the city, that great Bhárata hung his head, sick at heart and joyless, as he made his way into his father's residence.

NOT SEEING HIS father there in his chamber, Bhárata went 66.1
to see his mother in hers. When Kaikéyi saw that her long-absent son had arrived, she sprang up in delight, leaving her golden seat. As soon as righteous Bhárata entered his house he noticed that the royal splendor was absent, and so he clasped his mother's lovely feet. She drew glorious Bhárata to her breast, embraced him and kissed him on the forehead, and then she began to question him: "How many 65.5
days is it now since you left your grandfather's residence? You must have flown along in your chariot. Are you not weary from the journey? Is your grandfather well, and your

api n' âdhva|śramaḥ śīghraṃ rathen' âpatatas tava.
Āryakas te sukuśalo Yudhājin mātulas tava?
pravāsāc ca sukhaṃ putra? sarvaṃ me vaktum arhasi.»
Evaṃ pṛṣṭhas tu Kaikeyyā priyaṃ pārthiva|nandanaḥ
ācaṣṭa Bharataḥ sarvaṃ mātre rājīva|locanaḥ.

«Adya me saptamī rātriś cyutasy' āryaka|veśmanaḥ
ambāyāḥ kuśalī tāto Yudhājin mātulaś ca me.
Yan me dhanaṃ ca ratnaṃ ca dadau rājā paraṃ|tapaḥ
pariśrāntaṃ pathy abhavat tato 'haṃ pūrvam āgataḥ.
66.10 Rāja|vākya|harair dūtais tvaryamāṇo 'ham āgataḥ
yad ahaṃ praṣṭum icchāmi tad ambā vaktum arhasi.
Śūnyo 'yaṃ śayanīyas te paryaṅko hema|bhūṣitaḥ
na c' âyam Ikṣvāku|janaḥ prahṛṣṭaḥ pratibhāti me.
Rājā bhavati bhūyiṣṭham ih' âmbāyā niveśane
tam ahaṃ n' âdya paśyāmi draṣṭum icchann ih' āgataḥ.
Pitur grahīṣye caraṇau taṃ mam' ākhyāhi pṛcchataḥ
āho svid amba jyeṣṭhāyāḥ Kausalyāyā niveśane?»

Taṃ pratyuvāca Kaikeyī priyavad ghoram apriyam
ajānantaṃ prajānantī rājya|lobhena mohitā:
«yā gatiḥ sarva|bhūtānāṃ tāṃ gatiṃ te pitā gataḥ.»
66.15 Tac chrutvā Bharato vākyaṃ dharm'|âbhijanavāñ śuciḥ
papāta sahasā bhūmau pitṛ|śoka|bal'|ârditaḥ.
Tataḥ śokena saṃvītaḥ pitur maraṇa|duḥkhitaḥ
vilalāpa mahā|tejā bhrānt'|ākulita|cetanaḥ.
«Etat suruciraṃ bhāti pitur me śayanaṃ purā
tad idaṃ na vibhāty adya vihīnaṃ tena dhīmatā.»
Tam ārtaṃ deva|saṃkāśaṃ samīkṣya patitaṃ bhuvi

uncle Yudhájit? Did you enjoy your visit, my son? You must tell me everything." So Kaikéyi fondly questioned him, and lotus-eyed Bhárata, the delight of the king, told his mother everything.

"Last night was the seventh since I left grandfather's residence. Mother's father is well, and so is my uncle Yudhájit. The king, the slayer of enemies, gave me riches and precious objects, but they were an encumbrance, and so I left them on the road and came on ahead. The messengers who 66.10
carried the order of the king urged me to make haste. Now I have something to ask my mother, and she must answer. This comfortable gold-worked couch of yours is empty. And the people of Ikshváku seem to me to have lost all delight. The king is usually here in mother's chamber. I have not yet seen him and came here in hopes that I would. I should like to clasp my father's feet. Answer my question, mother. Could he perhaps be in the chamber of my eldest mother, Kausálya?"

Infatuated by her lust for kingship, Kaikéyi replied to him—an artful mother to an artless son—announcing the grievous event as if it were good news: "Your father has followed the course all living creatures must follow." When 66.15
he heard these words Bhárata, an honest son of a righteous family, fell suddenly to the ground, shattered by the violence of his grief for his father. Enveloped in grief, sorrowing over the death of his father, mighty Bhárata lamented, his mind reeling in confusion. "This couch of Father's used to look so lovely to me. It does not look that way today, with the wise man gone from it." Seeing her godlike son fallen on the ground, anguished and grief-stricken, Kaikéyi tried to help

utthāpayitvā śok'|ārtaṃ vacanaṃ c' êdam abravīt:
«Uttiṣṭh' ôttiṣṭha! kiṃ śeṣe rāja|putra mahā|yaśaḥ?
tvad|vidhā na hi śocanti santaḥ sadasi saṃmatāḥ.»

66.20 Sa rudatyā ciraṃ kālaṃ bhūmau viparivṛtya ca
jananīṃ pratyuvāc' êdaṃ śokair bahubhir āvṛtaḥ:
«Abhiṣekṣyati Rāmaṃ tu rājā yajñaṃ nu yakṣyati
ity ahaṃ kṛta|saṃkalpo hṛṣṭo yātrām ayāsiṣam.
Tad idaṃ hy anyathā|bhūtaṃ! vyavadīrṇaṃ mano mama
pitaraṃ yo na paśyāmi nityaṃ priya|hite ratam.
Amba ken' âtyagād rājā vyādhinā mayy an|āgate?
dhanyā Rāmādayaḥ sarve yaiḥ pitā saṃskṛtaḥ svayam.
Na nūnaṃ māṃ mahā|rājaḥ prāptaṃ jānāti kīrtimān
upajighredd hi māṃ mūrdhni tātaḥ saṃnamya sa|tvaram.

66.25 Kva sa pāṇiḥ sukha|sparśas tātasy' âkliṣṭa|karmaṇaḥ
yena māṃ rajasā dhvastam abhīkṣṇaṃ parimārjati?
Yo me bhrātā pitā bandhur yasya dāso 'smi dhīmataḥ
tasya māṃ śīghram ākhyāhi Rāmasy' âkliṣṭa|karmaṇaḥ.
Pitā hi bhavati jyeṣṭho dharmam āryasya jānataḥ
tasya pādau grahīṣyāmi sa hīdānīṃ gatir mama.
Ārye kim abravīd rājā pitā me satya|vikramaḥ?
paścimaṃ sādhu|saṃdeśam icchāmi śrotum ātmanaḥ.»

him up and spoke these words: "Come now, get up. Why are you lying there? Men like you do not grieve, glorious prince—good men esteemed in the assembly."

But he continued to weep for a long time and to roll 66.20
about on the ground. Then, shrouded in his many sorrows, he said to his mother: "I had imagined the king was going to consecrate Rama or perform a sacrifice, and so I made the journey in delight. How differently it has all turned out! My very mind is torn apart, that I shall never again see my father, who always strove so earnestly for my happiness and welfare. Oh mother, of what illness did the king pass away before I could return? How fortunate are Rama and all the others who were present to perform the last rites for Father. But surely the great and illustrious king does not yet know I have come. Otherwise my dear brother would hurry here and bend down to kiss me on the forehead. Where is that 66.25
hand so pleasant to the touch, the hand of my tireless dear brother, with which he would always brush away the dust from me? Have my arrival announced to him at once, to tireless Rama. That wise man is now father, brother and every kinsman to me, and I his slave. For in the eyes of a noble man who knows the way of righteousness one's eldest brother is as one's father. His are the feet I would clasp, for he is my only refuge now. But my lady, what did the truthful king, my father, say? I just want to hear what last message he might have had for me."

Iti pṛṣṭā yathā|tattvaṃ Kaikeyī vākyam abravīt:
«‹Rām' êti› rājā vilapan ‹hā Sīte! Lakṣmaṇ' êti› ca
sa mah"|ātmā paraṃ lokaṃ gato gatimatāṃ varaḥ.
Imāṃ tu paścimāṃ vācaṃ vyājahāra pitā tava
kāla|dharma|parikṣiptaḥ pāśair iva mahā|gajaḥ:
‹siddh'|ârthās tu narā Rāmam āgataṃ Sītayā saha
Lakṣmaṇaṃ ca mahā|bāhuṃ drakṣyanti punar āgatam.›»
Tac chrutvā viṣasād' âiva dvitīy'|âpriya|śaṃsanāt
viṣaṇṇa|vadano bhūtvā bhūyaḥ papraccha mātaram:
«Kva c' êdānīṃ sa dharm'|ātmā Kausaly"|ānanda|vardhanaḥ
Lakṣmaṇena saha bhrātrā Sītayā ca samaṃ gataḥ?»
Tathā pṛṣṭā yathā|tattvam ākhyātum upacakrame
māt" âsya yugapad vākyaṃ vipriyaṃ priya|śaṅkayā:
«Sa hi rāja|sutaḥ putra cīra|vāsā mahā|vanam
Daṇḍakān saha Vaidehyā Lakṣmaṇ'|ânucaro gataḥ.»
Tac chrutvā Bharatas trasto bhrātuś cāritra|śaṅkayā
svasya vaṃśasya māhātmyāt praṣṭuṃ samupacakrame:
«Kaccin na brāhmaṇa|vadhaṃ hṛtaṃ Rāmeṇa kasya cit?
kaccin n' āḍhyo daridro vā ten' âpāpo vihiṃsitaḥ?
Kaccin na para|dārān vā rāja|putro 'bhimanyate?
kasmāt sa Daṇḍak'|âraṇye bhrūṇah" êva vivāsitaḥ?»
Ath' âsya capalā mātā tat sva|karma yathā|tatham
ten' âiva strī|svabhāvena vyāhartum upacakrame.

So he questioned her, and Kaikéyi replied straightforwardly: "The great king, as good a man as ever lived, went to the next world lamenting, 'Rama!' and 'O Sita, Lákshmana!' And when at last the law of time caught your father up, the way a snare catches a great elephant, the last words he uttered were these: 'Fortunate the men who will see Rama when he comes back with Sita, and see great-armed Lákshmana when he comes home.'" Hearing this Bhárata became still more distraught, for he anticipated yet another calamity. With an expression of deep distress he questioned his mother further: "But where can the righteous prince have gone, the delight of Kausálya, with our brother Lákshmana and Sita?" Questioned thus his mother again answered straightforwardly. She promptly began to relate the grievous event, supposing it would be taken as good news: "My son, the prince went off in bark-cloth garments to the great Dándaka forest, with Vaidéhi and Lákshmana following after him."

Bhárata was alarmed when he heard this, for doubts had been raised about his brother's conduct. Concerned for the greatness of his dynasty, he began questioning her further: "Rama did not seize the wealth of any *brahman*, did he? He did not harm some innocent man, whether rich or poor? The prince did not covet another man's wife, did he? Why was he exiled to Dándaka wilderness like one who has slain an unborn child?" His capricious mother then began to tell exactly what she had done, and with the same feminine disposition that had made her do it.

«Na brāhmaṇa|dhanaṃ kiṃcid dhṛtaṃ Rāmeṇa kasya cit
kaś cin n' āḍhyo daridro vā ten' âpāpo vihiṃsitaḥ
na Rāmaḥ para|dārāṃś ca cakṣurbhyām api paśyati.
Mayā tu putra śrutv" âiva Rāmasy' âiv' âbhiṣecanam
yācitas te pitā rājyaṃ Rāmasya ca vivāsanam.
Sa sva|vṛttiṃ samāsthāya pitā te tat tath" âkarot
Rāmaś ca saha|Saumitriḥ preṣitaḥ saha Sītayā.
Tam apaśyan priyaṃ putraṃ mahī|pālo mahā|yaśāḥ
putra|śoka|paridyūnaḥ pañcatvam upapedivān.
Tvayā tv idānīṃ dharmajña rājatvam avalambyatām
tvat|kṛte hi mayā sarvam idam evaṃ|vidhaṃ kṛtam.
Tat putra śīghraṃ vidhinā vidhijñair
Vasiṣṭha|mukhyaiḥ sahito dvij'|êndraiḥ
saṃkālya rājānam adīna|sattvam
ātmānam ūrvyām abhiṣecayasva.»

Śrutvā tu pitaraṃ vṛttaṃ bhrātaru ca vivāsitau
Bharato duḥkha|saṃtapta idaṃ vacanam abravīt:
«Kiṃ nu kāryaṃ hatasy' êha mama rājyena śocataḥ
vihīnasy' âtha pitrā ca bhrātrā pitṛ|samena ca?
Duḥkhe me duḥkham akaror vraṇe kṣāram iv' ādadhāḥ
rājānaṃ preta|bhāvasthaṃ kṛtvā Rāmaṃ ca tāpasaṃ.
Kulasya tvam abhāvāya kāla|rātrir iv' āgatā
aṅgāram upagūhya sma pitā me n' âvabuddhavān.
Kausalyā ca Sumitrā ca putra|śok'|âbhipīḍite

"No, Rama did not seize the wealth of any *brahman*. He harmed no innocent man, rich or poor, and Rama would never so much as cast his eyes upon the wife of another man. It was I, my son. As soon as I learned of Rama's consecration, I demanded that your father award you the kingship and exile Rama. Your father followed the proper course of action and did exactly that, and so Rama and Saumítri were sent away with Sita. His beloved son gone from his sight, the glorious protector of the earth was crushed with such grief for his son that he died. So now you must assume the kingship, as you know to be right. It was on your behalf I did all this, all that I could do. Therefore, my son, in concert with the chief *brahmans*—those who know the ritual precepts, under the lead of Vasíshtha—you must at once perform according to precept the last rites for the courageous king, and then have yourself consecrated to power over the wide earth." 66.40 66.45

When Bhárata learned that his father had passed away and his two brothers were in exile, he was consumed with sorrow and spoke these words: 67.1

"What possible use have I for kingship, stricken as I am and grieving, bereft of both my father and the brother who is like a father to me? You have heaped sorrow upon my sorrow, rubbed salt into a wound, by killing the king and making Rama an ascetic. Like the night of doom have you come to annihilate this House. My father had no idea he was holding a firebrand in his embrace. It will be a miracle if Kausálya and Sumítra survive this torture of grief for their sons—and all because of you, my very own mother! My 67.5

duṣkaraṃ yadi jīvetāṃ prāpya tvāṃ jananīṃ mama!
Nanu tv āryo 'pi dharm'|ātmā tvayi vṛttim anuttamām
vartate guru|vṛttijño yathā mātari vartate.
Tathā jyeṣṭhā hi me mātā Kausalyā dīrgha|darśinī
tvayi dharmaṃ samāsthāya bhaginyām iva vartate.
Tasyāḥ putraṃ kṛt'|ātmānaṃ cīra|valkala|vāsasam!
prasthāpya vana|vāsāya kathaṃ pāpe na śocasi?

Apāpa|darśinaṃ śūraṃ kṛt'|ātmānaṃ yaśasvinam
pravrājya cīra|vasanaṃ kiṃ nu paśyasi kāraṇam?
67.10 Lubdhāyā vidito? manye na te 'haṃ Rāghavaṃ prati
tathā hy an|artho rājy'|ârthaṃ tvayā nīto mahān ayam.
Ahaṃ hi puruṣa|vyāghrāv apaśyan Rāma|Lakṣmaṇau
kena śakti|prabhāvena rājyaṃ rakṣitum utsahe?
Taṃ hi nityaṃ mahā|rājo balavantaṃ mahā|balaḥ
apāśrito 'bhūd dharm'|ātmā merur meru|vanaṃ yathā.
So 'haṃ katham imaṃ bhāraṃ mahā|dhurya|samudyatam?
damyo dhuram iv' āsādya saheyaṃ kena c' âujasā.
Atha vā me bhavec chaktir yogair buddhi|balena vā
sa|kāmāṃ na kariṣyāmi tvām ahaṃ putra|gardhinīm
nivartayiṣyāmi vanād bhrātaraṃ sva|jana|priyam.»
67.15 Ity evam uktvā Bharato mah"|ātmā
priy'|êtarair vākya|gaṇais tudaṃs tām
śok'|āturaś c' âpi nanāda bhūyaḥ
siṃho yathā parvata|gahvarasthaḥ.

brother is righteous and knows the proper way to behave toward his elders, and surely his behavior toward you was perfect, just as toward his own mother. My eldest mother, Kausálya, far-sighted though she is, treated you like a sister in her adherence to the way of righteousness. And you have sent her accomplished son away in bark-cloth garments, to a life in the forest! Can you feel no grief, evil woman?

He is an accomplished and glorious hero who never contemplated evil. What possible purpose could you have had in sight to banish him in clothes of bark? Was it all for the 67.10
sake of kingship that you brought about this great misfortune? In your greed, I suppose, you never understood how I felt toward Rama. With those tigers among men, Rama and Lákshmana, gone from my sight, by virtue of what power would I be able to guard the kingdom? The great and righteous king himself had great might, yet he would constantly retreat behind his mighty son, like Mount Meru behind its forest. What strength have I to bear such a burden? I am like a calf before a load only a great ox can draw. Even were I to acquire the power through stratagems or force of intellect, I would never grant you your wish—not you, a woman so blindly ambitious for her son. I will bring my brother back from the forest, the beloved of his people." So great Bhárata 67.15
spoke—and how hard his words struck, the very opposite of what she had hoped—and he roared out once more in the anguish of his grief, like a lion inside a mountain cave.

68.1 Tāṃ tathā garhayitvā tu mātaraṃ Bharatas tadā
roṣeṇa mahat” āviṣṭaḥ punar ev’ âbravīd vacaḥ:
«Rājyād bhraṃśasva Kaikeyi nṛśaṃse duṣṭa|cāriṇi!
parityaktā ca dharmeṇa māṃ ṛte rudatī bhava.
Kiṃ nu te ’dūṣayad rājā Rāmo vā bhṛśa|dhārmikaḥ
yayor mṛtyur vivāsaś ca tvat|kṛte tulyam āgatau?
Bhrūṇa|hatyām asi prāptā kulasy’ âsya vināśanāt
Kaikeyi narakaṃ gaccha mā ca bhartuḥ sa|lokatām.
68.5 Yat tvayā hīdṛśaṃ pāpaṃ kṛtaṃ ghoreṇa karmaṇā
sarva|loka|priyaṃ hitvā mam’ âpy āpāditaṃ bhayam.
Tvat|kṛte me pitā vṛtto Rāmaś c’ âraṇyam āśritaḥ
a|yaśo jīva|loke ca tvay” âhaṃ pratipāditaḥ.
Mātṛ|rūpe mam’ âmitre nṛśaṃse rājya|kāmuke!
na te ’ham abhibhāṣyo ’smi durvṛtte pati|ghātini!
Kausalyā ca Sumitrā ca yāś c’ ânyā mama mātaraḥ
duḥkhena mahat” āviṣṭās tvāṃ prāpya kula|dūṣiṇīm!
Na tvam Aśvapateḥ kanyā dharma|rājasya dhīmataḥ
rākṣasī tatra jāt” âsi kula|pradhvaṃsinī pituḥ.
68.10 Yat tvayā dhārmiko Rāmo nityaṃ satya|parāyaṇaḥ
vanaṃ prasthāpito duḥkhāt pitā ca tridivaṃ gataḥ.
Yat pradhān” âsi tat pāpaṃ mayi: pitrā vinā kṛte
bhrātṛbhyāṃ ca parityakte sarva|lokasya c’ âpriye.
Kausalyāṃ dharma|saṃyuktāṃ viyuktāṃ pāpa|niścaye
kṛtvā kaṃ prāpsyase? tv adya lokaṃ niraya|gāminī.

So Bhárata reviled his mother, and in the grip of a wild rage he addressed her once more: 68.1

"It is you who should be expelled from the kingdom, Kaikéyi, you vicious, wicked woman! And abandoned in accordance with all that is right, may you weep your eyes out without me. What possible wrong could the king or perfectly righteous Rama have done you, that because of you they should have found death and banishment both at once? You are guilty of murdering the unborn by your destruction of this House. May you go to hell, Kaikéyi, and never come to share the afterworld of your husband. That you could be capable of such evil and so horrible a deed—renouncing the beloved of all the world—makes me fearful on my own account as well. Because of you my father is gone and Rama withdrawn to the wilderness, and you have brought infamy upon me in the eyes of every living soul. 68.5

O enemy of mine in a mother's guise, malicious woman lusting for kingship! Never speak to me again, depraved murderess of your husband! Kausálya and Sumítra and the rest of my mothers are afflicted by great sorrow and it is all your fault, polluter of our House! You are no true daughter of Ashva·pati, a wise and righteous king, but a demoness born to lay your father's House in ruins. Because of you righteous Rama, constant in his devotion to truth, has been driven to the forest, and father has gone to heaven in his grief. This evil for which you have striven falls upon my head: I am left without my father and abandoned by my brothers, to become an object of hatred to all the world. You have parted Kausálya from her son, a woman who has never departed from righteousness. What afterworld can 68.10

Kiṃ n' âvabudhyase krūre niyataṃ bandhu|saṃśrayam
jyeṣṭhaṃ pitṛ|samaṃ Rāmaṃ Kausalyāy" ātma|saṃbhavam?
Aṅga|pratyaṅgajaḥ putro hṛdayāc c' âpi jāyate
tasmāt priyataro mātuḥ priyatvān na tu bāndhavaḥ.

68.15 Anyadā kila dharmajñā Surabhiḥ sura|saṃmatā
vahamānau dadarś' ōrvyāṃ putrau vigata|cetasau.
Tāv ardha|divase śrāntau dṛṣṭvā putrau mahī|tale
ruroda putra|śokena bāṣpa|paryākul'|ēkṣaṇā.
Adhastād vrajatas tasyāḥ sura|rājño mah"|ātmanaḥ
bindavaḥ patitā gātre sūkṣmāḥ surabhi|gandhinaḥ.
Tāṃ dṛṣṭvā śoka|saṃtaptāṃ vajra|pāṇir yaśasvinīm
Indraḥ prāñjalir udvignaḥ sura|rājo 'bravīd vacaḥ:
‹bhayaṃ kaccin na c' âsmāsu kutaś cid vidyate mahat?
kuto nimittaḥ śokas te? brūhi sarva|hit'|âiṣiṇi.›

68.20 Evam uktā tu Surabhiḥ sura|rājena dhīmatā
pratyuvāca tato dhīrā vākyaṃ vākya|viśāradā:
‹śāntaṃ pāpaṃ! na vaḥ kiṃ cit kutaś cid amar'|âdhipa
ahaṃ tu magnau śocāmi sva|putrau viṣame sthitau.
Etau dṛṣṭvā kṛṣau dīnau sūrya|raśmi|pratāpinau
vadhyamānau balīvardau karṣakeṇa sur'|âdhipa.
Mama kāyāt prasūtau hi duḥkhitau bhāra|pīḍitau
yau dṛṣṭvā paritapye 'haṃ n' âsti putra|samaḥ priyaḥ.›

you attain now, evil-scheming creature? You can only go to hell. Are you not aware, cruel woman, that Rama—a man of restraint, the refuge of his kinsmen, the eldest son and his father's one equal—that Rama arose from Kausálya's very self? Limb from mother's limb is a son born, and from her heart. That is why she loves him so, because he is her very own, and not mere kin.

Once upon a time, the story goes, righteous Súrabhi, 68.15
the cow held in esteem by the gods, caught sight of two of her sons. They were plowing the broad earth, in a state of stupor. Seeing her sons upon the earth exhausted at midday, she wept in grief for them, and her eyes were flooded with tears. Clear and fragrant her teardrops fell, and they touched a limb of the great king of gods as he was passing below her. Indra, wielder of the bolt, saw how the glorious cow was consumed with grief, and the king of the gods was disquieted. He cupped his hands in reverence and addressed her: 'No great danger threatens us from any quarter, does it? What is the cause of your grief? Tell me, all-beneficent cow.' So the wise king of the gods spoke, and Súrabhi com- 68.20
posed herself and eloquently replied: 'Perish the thought! No, nothing threatens you from any quarter, over lord of the deathless gods. I am only grieving for two of my sons, who languish in their sorry plight. I see how haggard and desolate the oxen are, how the rays of the sun are burning them, and how the plowman beats them, overlord of the gods. They were born of my body, and for me to see them sorrowful and oppressed by burdens is agony. There is nothing so dear as a son.'

Yasyāḥ putra|sahasrāṇi s” âpi śocati kāmadhuk
kiṃ punar yā vinā Rāmaṃ Kausalyā vartayiṣyati?
68.25 Eka|putrā ca sādhvī ca vivats” êyaṃ tvayā kṛtā
tasmāt tvaṃ satataṃ duḥkhaṃ pretya c’ êha ca lapsyase.
Ahaṃ hy apacitiṃ bhrātuḥ pituś ca sakalām imām
vardhanaṃ yaśasaś c’ âpi kariṣyāmi na saṃśayaḥ.
Ānāyayitvā tanayaṃ Kausalyāyā mahā|dyutim
svayam eva pravekṣyāmi vanaṃ muni|niṣevitam.»
Iti nāga iv’ âraṇye tomar’|âṅkuśa|coditaḥ
papāta bhuvi saṃkruddho niḥśvasann iva pannagaḥ.
Saṃrakta|netraḥ śithil’|âmbaras tadā
vidhūta|sarv’|ābharaṇaḥ paraṃ|tapaḥ
babhūva bhūmau patito nṛp’|ātmajaḥ
Śacī|pateḥ ketur iv’ ôtsava|kṣaye.

The wish-granting cow had countless sons and even so she grieved. How much more will Kausálya grieve, who must live without Rama? The good woman has but one 68.25
son, and you have made her childless. For this you shall reap sorrow forever, both in this world and when you die. As for me, there is no question but that I must make full amends to my brother and father, and so restore our glory. I will have Kausálya's splendid son brought back and go myself into the forest where sages make their home." So he spoke, and with the look of an elephant in the wilderness driven with prods and goads, he fell upon the ground in a rage, hissing like a snake. His eyes bloodshot, his clothes in disarray, all his jewelry cast aside, the enemy-slaying prince lay fallen on the ground like the banner of Indra, Shachi's lord, when the festival is over.

69–76
BHÁRATA REFUSES THE THRONE

69.1 Tath" âiva krośatas tasya Bharatasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
Kausalyā śabdam ājñāya Sumitrām idam abravīt:
«Āgataḥ krūra|kāryāyāḥ Kaikeyyā Bharataḥ sutaḥ
tam ahaṃ draṣṭum icchāmi Bharataṃ dīrgha|darśinam.»
Evam uktvā Sumitrāṃ sā vivarṇā malin'|âmbarā
pratasthe Bharato yatra vepamānā vicetanā.
Sa tu Rām'|ânujaś c' âpi Śatrughna|sahitas tadā
pratasthe Bharato yatra Kausalyāyā niveśanam.
69.5 Tataḥ Śatrughna|Bharatau Kausalyāṃ prekṣya duḥkhitau
paryaṣvajetāṃ duḥkh'|ārtāṃ patitāṃ naṣṭa|cetanām.
Bharataṃ pratyuvāc' êdaṃ Kausalyā bhṛśa|duḥkhitā:
«idaṃ te rājya|kāmasya rājyaṃ prāptam a|kaṇṭakam
saṃprāptaṃ bata Kaikeyyā śīghraṃ krūreṇa karmaṇā.
Prasthāpya cīra|vasanaṃ putraṃ me vana|vāsinam
Kaikeyī kaṃ guṇaṃ tatra paśyati krūra|darśinī?
Kṣipraṃ mām api Kaikeyī prasthāpayitum arhati
Hiraṇyanābho yatr' āste suto me sumahā|yaśāḥ?
Atha vā svayam ev' âhaṃ Sumitr"|ânucarā sukham
agni|hotraṃ puraskṛtya prasthāsye yatra Rāghavaḥ.
69.10 Kāmaṃ vā svayam ev' âdya tatra māṃ netum arhasi
yatr' âsau puruṣa|vyāghras tapyate me tapaḥ sutaḥ.
Idaṃ hi tava vistīrṇaṃ dhana|dhānya|samācitam
hasty|aśva|ratha|saṃpūrṇaṃ rājyaṃ niryātitaṃ tayā.»
Evaṃ vilapamānāṃ tāṃ Bharataḥ prāñjalis tadā
Kausalyāṃ pratyuvāc' êdaṃ śokair bahubhir āvṛtām:
«Ārye kasmād ajānantaṃ garhase mām a|kilbiṣam?
vipulāṃ ca mama prītiṃ sthirāṃ jānāsi Rāghave.

As great Bhárata was crying out, the sound reached Kausálya, and she said to Sumítra: "Far-sighted Bhárata, the son of that savage woman Kaikéyi has returned. I want to see him." With this, she set out to Bhárata, her face drained of color and her garment filthy, trembling and almost insensible. But at that same moment Rama's younger brother was setting out to Kausálya's residence, accompanied by Shatrúghna. And when Shatrúghna and Bhárata saw Kausálya, they were overcome with sorrow. She dropped down, unconscious in the anguish of her sorrow, and they took her in their embrace. 69.1 69.5

Then, in deep sorrow, Kausálya spoke to Bhárata. "You lusted for the kingship and here you have it unchallenged—and how quickly Kaikéyi secured it for you by her savage deed. But what advantage did that cruel and scheming Kaikéyi hope to gain by driving out my son in clothes of bark to live in the forest? Why doesn't Kaikéyi at once drive me out as well to where my son is staying, my glorious Hiránya·nabha? Then again, I should be happy to go to Rághava on my own, with Sumítra to attend me and the sacred fires carried at our head. But no, truly it is up to you to send me there yourself, where my son, the tiger among men, is practicing austerities. For this vast kingdom is now yours; she has delivered it to you, with all its abundance of wealth and grain, all its teeming elephants, horses, chariots." 69.10

As Kausálya lamented like this, shrouded in her many sorrows, Bhárata cupped his hands in reverence and addressed her: "My lady, why do you upbraid me? I am guiltless and knew nothing of this. You know how deep and enduring is my love for Rághava. May that man never come to think

Kṛtā śāstr'|ânugā buddhir mā bhūt tasya kadā cana
satya|saṃdhaḥ satāṃ śreṣṭho yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.
69.15 Praiṣyaṃ pāpīyasāṃ yātu sūryaṃ ca prati mehatu
hantu pādena gāṃ suptāṃ yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.
Kārayitvā mahat karma bhartā bhṛtyam an|arthakam
adharmo yo 'sya so 'syās tu yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.
Paripālayamānasya rājño bhūtāni putravat
tatas tu druhyatāṃ pāpaṃ yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.
Bali|ṣaḍ|bhāgam uddhṛtya nṛpasy' ârakṣataḥ prajāḥ
adharmo yo 'sya so 'sy' âstu yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.

Saṃśrutya ca tapasvibhyaḥ satre vai yajña|dakṣiṇām
tāṃ vipralapatāṃ pāpaṃ yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.
69.20 Hasty|aśva|ratha|saṃbādhe yuddhe śastra|samākule
mā sma kārṣīt satāṃ dharmaṃ yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.
Upadiṣṭaṃ susūkṣm'|ârthaṃ śāstraṃ yatnena dhīmatā
sa nāśayatu duṣṭ'|âtmā yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.
Pāyasaṃ kṛsaraṃ chāgaṃ vṛthā so 'śnātu nirghṛṇaḥ
gurūṃś c' âpy avajānātu yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.
Putrair dāraiś ca bhṛtyaiś ca sva|gṛhe parivāritaḥ
sa eko mṛṣṭam aśnātu yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.

in harmony with the sacred texts who sanctioned my elder brother's going—Rama, the very best of men, who always keeps his word. May he come to serve the most wicked of 69.15
men, may he pass urine facing the sun and kick a sleeping cow, he who sanctioned my brother's going. May the unrighteousness attaching to a master who forces an onerous task upon his servant without remuneration attach to him who sanctioned my brother's going. May the sin that beings incur in turning traitor to a king who has protected them like his own children be reckoned to his account who sanctioned my brother's going. May the unrighteousness attaching to a king who levies a sixth portion in tax without guarding his subjects attach to him who sanctioned my brother's going.

May the sin men incur who promise priests their fee at a sacrifice and then cry off be reckoned to his account who sanctioned my brother's going. May he never honor the code 69.20
of the brave in battle where elephants, horses and chariots are crowding and weapons flying thick, he who sanctioned my brother's going. The subtle meaning of the sacred texts, which the wise impart with so much care, may the evil-hearted man forever lose who sanctioned my brother's going. May he eat milk-rice, sesame-rice, and goat's flesh to no purpose; may he show contempt for his *guru*s, the ruthless man who sanctioned my brother's going. May his children and wife and servants huddle about him at home while he alone eats delicacies, the man who sanctioned my brother's going.

Rāja|strī|bāla|vṛddhānāṃ vadhe yat pāpam ucyate
bhṛtya|tyāge ca yat pāpaṃ tat pāpaṃ pratipadyatām.
69.25 Ubhe saṃdhye śayānasya yat pāpaṃ parikalpyate
tac ca pāpaṃ bhavet tasya yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.
Yad agni|dāyake pāpaṃ yat pāpaṃ guru|talpage
mitra|drohe ca yat pāpaṃ tat pāpaṃ pratipadyatām.
Devatānāṃ pitṝṇāṃ ca mātā|pitros tath" âiva ca
mā sma kārṣīt sa śuśrūṣāṃ yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.
Satāṃ lokāt satāṃ kīrtyāḥ sajjuṣṭāt karmaṇas tathā
bhraśyatu kṣipram ady' âiva yasy' āryo 'numate gataḥ.»
Vihīnāṃ pati|putrābhyāṃ Kausalyāṃ pārthiv'|ātmajaḥ
evam āśvāsayann eva duḥkh'|ārto nipapāta ha.
69.30 Tathā tu śapathaiḥ kaṣṭaiḥ śapamānam a|cetanam
Bharataṃ śoka|saṃtaptaṃ Kausalyā vākyam abravīt:
«Mama duḥkham idaṃ putra bhūyaḥ samupajāyate
śapathaiḥ śapamāno hi prāṇān uparuṇatsi me.
Diṣṭyā na calito dharmād ātmā te saha|Lakṣmaṇaḥ
vatsa satya|pratijño me satāṃ lokān avāpsyasi.»
Evaṃ vilapamānasya duḥkh'|ārtasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
mohāc ca śoka|saṃrodhād babhūva lulitaṃ manaḥ.
Lālapyamānasya vicetanasya
pranaṣṭa|buddheḥ patitasya bhūmau
muhur muhur niḥśvasataś ca dīrgham
sā tasya śokena jagāma rātriḥ.

May he be guilty of the sin laid to one who murders a king, a woman, a child or an elder, or who abandons his dependents. May the sin charged to one who sleeps through 69.25
both the morning and evening worship be reckoned to his account who sanctioned my brother's going. May he be guilty of the sins of arson, violation of a *guru*'s bed and treachery to allies. May he never show obedience to the gods, his ancestors, his mother or father, he who sanctioned my brother's going. May he be excluded at once, this very moment, from the deeds practiced by the good, from the praises of the good, from the world of the good, he who sanctioned my brother's going." In this way the prince tried to reassure Kausálya, bereft of her husband and son, and then, in the anguish of his sorrow, he collapsed.

They were heavy curses Bhárata had called down upon 69.30
his head, and as he lay insensible and consumed with grief, Kausálya addressed him: "This sorrow of mine, my son, has grown only greater. That you should curse yourself with such curses chokes the very breath of life within me. Thank God, my child, that your own thoughts never swerved from righteousness any more than those of Lákshmana. If what you promise me is true, you shall attain the world the good attain." So great Bhárata lamented in the anguish of his sorrow, his mind in turmoil from all the confusion and besieged by grief. On and on he wildly lamented; he fell in a stupor to the ground; heaving deep sighs all the while he passed the night lost in grief.

70.1 Tam evaṃ śoka|saṃtaptaṃ Bharataṃ Kekayī|sutam
uvāca vadatāṃ śreṣṭho Vasiṣṭhaḥ śreṣṭha|vāg ṛṣiḥ:
«Alaṃ śokena bhadraṃ te rāja|putra mahā|yaśaḥ
prāpta|kālaṃ nara|pateḥ kuru saṃyānam uttaram.»
Vasiṣṭhasya vacaḥ śrutvā Bharato dhāraṇāṃ gataḥ
preta|kāryāṇi sarvāṇi kārayām āsa dharmavit.
Uddhṛtaṃ taila|saṃkledāt sa tu bhūmau niveśitam
āpīta|varṇa|vadanaṃ prasuptam iva bhūmipam.
70.5 Niveśya śayane c' âgrye nānā|ratna|pariṣkṛte
tato Daśarathaṃ putro vilalāpa suduḥkhitaḥ.

«Kiṃ te vyavasitaṃ rājan proṣite mayy an|āgate
vivāsya Rāmaṃ dharmajñaṃ Lakṣmaṇaṃ ca mahā|balam?
Kva yāsyasi mahā|rāja hitv" êmaṃ duḥkhitaṃ janam
hīnaṃ puruṣa|siṃhena Rāmeṇ' âkliṣṭa|karmaṇā?
Yoga|kṣemaṃ tu te rājan ko 'smin kalpayitā pure
tvayi prayāte svas tāta Rāme ca vanam āśrite?
Vidhavā pṛthivī rājaṃs tvayā hīnā na rājate
hīna|candr" êva rajanī nagarī pratibhāti mām.»
70.10 Evaṃ vilapamānaṃ taṃ Bharataṃ dīna|mānasaṃ
abravīd vacanaṃ bhūyo Vasiṣṭhas tu mahān ṛṣiḥ:
«Preta|kāryāṇi yāny asya kartavyāni viśām|pateḥ
tāny a|vyagraṃ mahā|bāho kriyatām a|vicāritam.»
«Tath" êti» Bharato vākyaṃ Vasiṣṭhasy' âbhipūjya tat
ṛtvik|purohit'|ācāryāṃs tvarayām āsa sarvaśaḥ.

As KAIKÉYI'S SON Bhárata still lay consumed with grief, 70.1
Vasíshtha, most eloquent of seers, came and eloquently spoke to him: "Glorious prince, I pray you, enough of this grief. It is time you performed the obsequies for the lord of men." Bhárata regained his composure on hearing Vasíshtha's words, and wise in the ways of righteousness he commenced the performance of all the funeral rites. The protector of the earth was removed from the oily liquid and laid upon the earth. His face had a yellowish tinge, and he seemed to be asleep. The son then had Dasha·ratha laid 70.5
upon a sumptuous bed encrusted with all kinds of gems, and he began to lament over him in deep sorrow.

"Why did you take this decision, your majesty, when I was away, before I could return, after sending righteous Rama into exile with mighty Lákshmana? Where are you going, great king, leaving your people in sorrow when the lion among men, tireless Rama, has already left them? Who is there, your majesty, to maintain the security of your city, now that you have gone to heaven, dear Father, and Rama has withdrawn to the forest? The earth has been widowed, your majesty; bereft of you it is cast into gloom. And the city looks to me like the night without a moon." So Bhá- 70.10
rata lamented, sick at heart, until the great seer Vasíshtha addressed him once more: "The funeral rites must be performed for the lord of the people. Let it all be done fully, great-armed prince, and without delay." "So be it," Bhárata replied, heeding Vasíshtha's command, and he urged all the sacrificial priests, the family priests and preceptors to make haste.

Ye tv agrato nar'|êndrasya agny|āgārād bahiṣkṛtāḥ
ṛtvigbhir yājakaiś c' âiva te hriyante yathā|vidhi.
Śibikāyām ath' āropya rājānaṃ gata|cetanam
bāṣpa|kaṇṭhā vimanasas tam ūhuḥ paricārakāḥ.
70.15 Hiraṇyaṃ ca suvarṇaṃ ca vāsāṃsi vividhāni ca
prakiranto janā mārgaṃ nṛ|pater agrato yayuḥ.
Candan'|āguru|niryāsān saralaṃ padmakaṃ tathā
deva|dārūṇi c' āhṛtya citāṃ cakrus tath" âpare.
Gandhān ucc'|âvacāṃś c' ânyāṃs
tatra dattv" âtha bhūmipam
tataḥ saṃveśayām āsuś
citā|madhye tam ṛtvijāḥ.
Tathā hut'|âśanaṃ hutvā jepus tasya tad" artvijaḥ
jaguś ca te yathā|śāstraṃ tatra sāmāni sāmagāḥ.
Śibikābhiś ca yānaiś ca yath"ârhaṃ tasya yoṣitaḥ
nagarān niryayus tatra vṛddhaiḥ parivṛtās tadā.
70.20 Prasavyaṃ c' âpi taṃ cakrur ṛtvijo 'gnicitaṃ nṛpam
striyaś ca śoka|saṃtaptāḥ Kausalyā pramukhās tadā.
Krauñcīnām iva nārīṇāṃ ninādas tatra śuśruve
ārtānāṃ karuṇaṃ kāle krośantīnāṃ sahasraśaḥ.
Tato rudantyo vivaśā vilapya ca punaḥ punaḥ
yānebhyaḥ Sarayū|tīram avaterur var'|âṅganāḥ.
Kṛt'|ôdakaṃ te Bharatena sārdhaṃ
nṛp'|âṅganā mantri|purohitāś ca
puraṃ praviśy' âśru|parīta|netrā
bhūmau daśāhaṃ vyanayanta duḥkham.

The sacred fires of the lord of men had been placed outside the fire-sanctuary, and the priests and sacrificers fetched them in accordance with the ritual precepts. Disconsolate and choked with sobs, his attendants raised the lifeless king onto a litter and bore him out. Ahead of the king went 70.15
people strewing the way with gold and silver and different kinds of garments. Others brought sandalwood, aloe, balsam, pine, *pádmaka* and *deva·daru* wood and built a pyre. After placing various other fragrant substances on the pyre, the priests laid the protector of the earth in the center. The priests made offering to the fire and intoned prayers for him, while the chanters of the *Sama Veda* sang the hymns in accordance with the sacred texts.

In palanquins and carriages, according to their rank, his wives had come out from the city in the company of the elders. And as the flames engulfed the king and the priests 70.20
walked leftward around him, the grieving women did likewise, with Kausálya at their head. At that hour could be heard a cry like the cry of curlews as the anguished women by the thousand raised their piteous wail. Afterward, amid uncontrolled weeping and constant lamentation, the women went to the bank of the Sárayu and alighted from their carriages. After making the funeral libation, the king's wives, the counsellors, the family priests and Bhárata tearfully reentered the city, where they sat upon the ground to pass the ten-day period of mourning.

71.1 TATO DAŚĀHE 'TIGATE kṛta|śauco nṛp'|ātmajaḥ
dvādaśe 'hani saṃprāpte śrāddha|karmāṇy akārayat.
Brāhmaṇebhyo dadau ratnaṃ dhanam annaṃ ca puṣkalam
bāstikaṃ bahu|śuklaṃ ca gāś c' âpi śataśas tathā.
Dāsī|dāsaṃ ca yānaṃ ca veśmāni sumahānti ca
brāhmaṇebhyo dadau putro rājñas tasy' āurdhvadaihikam.
Tataḥ prabhāta|samaye divase 'tha trayo|daśe
vilalāpa mahā|bāhur Bharataḥ śoka|mūrchitaḥ.
71.5 Bāṣp'|âpihita|kaṇṭhaś ca śodhan'|ârtham upāgataḥ
citā|mūle pitur vākyam idam āha suduḥkhitaḥ:
«Tāta yasmin niṣṛṣṭo 'haṃ tvayā bhrātari Rāghave
tasmin vanaṃ pravrajite śūnye tyakto 'smy ahaṃ tvayā!
Yath"|âgatir a|nāthāyāḥ putraḥ pravrājito vanam
tām ambāṃ tāta Kausalyāṃ tyaktvā tvaṃ kva gato nṛpa?»
Dṛṣṭvā bhasm'|âruṇaṃ tac ca
dagdh'|âsthi|sthāna|maṇḍalam
pituḥ śarīra|nirvāṇaṃ
niṣṭanan viṣasāda ha.
Sa tu dṛṣṭvā rudan dīnaḥ papāta dharaṇī|tale
utthāpyāmānaḥ Śakrasya yantra|dhvaja iva cyutaḥ.
71.10 Abhipetus tataḥ sarve tasy' âmātyāḥ śuci|vratam
anta|kāle nipatitaṃ Yayātim ṛṣayo yathā.
Śatrughnaś c' âpi Bharataṃ dṛṣṭvā śoka|pariplutam
visaṃjño nyapatad bhūmau bhūmi|pālam anusmaran.
Unmatta iva niścetā vilalāpa suduḥkhitaḥ
smṛtvā pitur guṇ'|âṅgāni tāni tāni tadā tadā.

When the ten-day period was over, the prince purified himself, and on the twelfth day he had the *shraddha* rites performed. To the *brahman*s he gave precious objects, money and abundant food—goat's flesh and much white rice—and cows by the hundred. Male and female slaves, carriages and grand houses did the prince bestow upon the *brahman*s as the funerary gifts of the king. On the thirteenth day at the hour of dawn, great-armed Bhárata went out to perform the ceremony of purification at the foot of his father's pyre. Again he was stunned by grief, and he began to lament. His throat choked with sobs, he cried out in his deep sorrow: "Oh dear father, my brother Rághava, to whose care you committed me, is banished to the forest, and you have left me in an utter void! My king, my father, where have you gone? You have left mother Kausálya helpless, with her son, her one refuge, banished to the forest."

And when he saw the ash-brown circle where the charred bones lay, the place where his father's body had met extinction, he gave way to despair and cried aloud. He was desolated by the sight of it and fell weeping to the ground, the way a pole-banner in honor of Shakra might fall while being fixed in place. His ministers all flew to the aid of the pious prince, just like the seers when Yayáti fell at his final hour. Seeing Bhárata overwhelmed with grief, Shatrúghna likewise fell senseless to the earth, fondly remembering the protector of the earth. He was nearly out of his mind, and like a madman he began to lament in his profound sorrow, recalling with every passing minute another of his father's virtues.

«Mantharā|prabhavas tīvraḥ Kaikeyī|grāha|saṃkulaḥ
vara|dāna|mayo 'kṣobhyo 'majjayac choka|sāgaraḥ!
Sukumāraṃ ca bālaṃ ca satataṃ lālitaṃ tvayā
kva tāta Bharataṃ hitvā vilapantaṃ gato bhavān?
71.15 Nanu bhojyeṣu pāneṣu vastreṣv ābharaṇeṣu ca
pravārayasi naḥ sarvāṃs tan naḥ ko 'dya kariṣyati?
Avadāraṇa|kāle tu pṛthivī n' âvadīryate
vihīnā yā tvayā rājñā dharmajñena mah"|ātmanā.
Pitari svargam āpanne Rāme c' âraṇyam āśrite
kiṃ me jīvita sāmarthyaṃ? pravekṣyāmi hut'|âśanam.
Hīno bhrātrā ca pitrā ca śūnyām Ikṣvāku|pālitām
Ayodhyāṃ na pravekṣyāmi pravekṣyāmi tapo|vanam.»
Tayor vilapitaṃ śrutvā vyasanaṃ c' ânvavekṣya tat
bhṛśam ārtatarā bhūyaḥ sarva ev' ânugāminaḥ.
71.20 Tato viṣaṇṇau śrāntau ca Śatrughna|Bharatāv ubhau
dharaṇyāṃ saṃvyaceṣṭetāṃ bhagna|śṛṅgāv iva ṛṣabhau.
Tataḥ prakṛtimān vaidyaḥ pitur eṣāṃ purohitaḥ
Vasiṣṭho Bharataṃ vākyam utthāpya tam uvāca ha:
«Trīṇi dvandvāni bhūteṣu pravṛttāny aviśeṣataḥ
teṣu c' âparihāryeṣu n' âivaṃ bhavitum arhasi.»
Sumantraś c' âpi Śatrughnam utthāpy' âbhiprasādya ca
śrāvayām āsa tattvajñaḥ sarva|bhūta|bhav'|âbhavau.
Utthitau tau nara|vyāghrau prakāśete yaśasvinau
varṣ"|ātapa|pariklinnau pṛthag indra|dhvajāv iva.

"Churned up in all its fury by Mánthara, with Kaikéyi as its raging beast and the offer of the boon its overwhelming flood, a sea of grief has swallowed us! Where have you gone, dear father, leaving Bhárata to lament, a boy so delicate and young, whom you always treated so indulgently? Remember 71.15
how you used to give us all so many delicacies to choose from, so many drinks, garments and ornaments—who will do that for us now? If the earth does not dissolve at once, though bereft of you, great and righteous king, it never will, not even at the hour of universal dissolution. With father gone to heaven and Rama withdrawn to the wilderness, what strength have I to live? I will enter a blazing fire. Bereft of my brother and father, I will not enter an empty Ayódhya that Ikshváku once protected. No, I will enter a grove of asceticism." Hearing the brothers' lamentation and reflecting on their calamity, the attendants were all afflicted with an anguish even sharper than before.

In despair and exhaustion, both Bhárata and Shatrúghna 71.20
lay writhing on the ground like bulls with shattered horns. But their father's family priest, the wise Vasíshtha, maintaining his usual composure, helped Bhárata to his feet and said to him:

"There are three dualities to which every living thing without exception is subject. They cannot be avoided, and so you must not act this way." Meanwhile Sumántra helped Shatrúghna to his feet, consoling him and sagely explaining how all living things are born and so must die. The glorious tigers among men stood up, but they both looked like banners of Indra ruined by the sun and rain. The sons wiped 69.25
away the tears from their reddened eyes and mourned in

71.25 Aśrūṇi parimṛdnantau rakt'|âkṣau dīna|bhāṣiṇau
amātyās tvarayanti sma tanayau c' âparāḥ kriyāḥ.

72.1 Atra yātrāṃ samīhantaṃ Śatrughno Lakṣmaṇ'|ânujaḥ
Bharataṃ śoka|saṃtaptam idaṃ vacanam abravīt:
«Gatir yaḥ sarva|bhūtānāṃ duḥkhe kiṃ punar ātmanaḥ
sa Rāmaḥ sattva|saṃpannaḥ striyā pravrājito vanam!
Balavān vīrya|saṃpanno Lakṣmaṇo nāma yo 'py asau?
kiṃ na mocayate Rāmaṃ kṛtv" âpi pitṛ|nigraham?
Pūrvam eva tu nigrāhyaḥ samavekṣya nay'|ânayau
utpathaṃ yaḥ samārūḍho nāryā rājā vaśaṃ gataḥ.»
72.5 Iti saṃbhāṣamāṇe tu Śatrughne Lakṣmaṇ'|ânuje
prāg|dvāre 'bhūt tadā kubjā sarv'|ābharaṇa|bhūṣitā.
Liptā candana|sāreṇa rāja|vastrāṇi bibhratī
mekhalā|dāmabhiś citrai rajju|baddh" êva vānarī.
Tāṃ samīkṣya tadā dvāḥstho bhṛśaṃ pāpasya kāriṇīm
gṛhītv" âkaruṇaṃ kubjāṃ Śatrughnāya nyavedayat:
«Yasyāḥ kṛte vane Rāmo nyasta|dehaś ca vaḥ pitā
s" êyaṃ pāpā! nṛśaṃsā ca tasyāḥ kuru yathā|mati.»
Śatrughnaś ca tad ājñāya vacanaṃ bhṛśa|duḥkhitaḥ
antaḥ|pura|carān sarvān ity uvāca dhṛta|vrataḥ:
72.10 «Tīvram utpāditaṃ duḥkhaṃ bhrātṝṇāṃ me tathā pituḥ
yayā s" êyaṃ nṛśaṃsasya karmaṇaḥ phalam aśnutām.»
Evam uktā ca ten' āśu sakhī|jana|samāvṛtā

desolation until, at the ministers' urging, they turned to the other rites.

Now, as the grief-stricken Bhárata was making the journey back, Lákshmana's younger brother Shatrúghna addressed him with these words: "Mighty Rama, the refuge of all creatures in sorrow, and of himself most of all, has been banished to the forest by a woman! And what of Lákshmana, the powerful, mighty Lákshmana? Why did he not free Rama, even if it meant deposing father? If he had fully weighed both sides of the issue, he would have deposed the king at the very first—a man who was under a woman's power and bent on an evil course." 72.1

As Lákshmana's younger brother Shatrúghna was speaking, the hunchback appeared at the front gate, all adorned with jewelry. She was anointed with essence of sandalwood and dressed in queenly garments, and with her many-colored belts and sashes she looked like a monkey tied up with rope. Catching sight of the hunchback, the cause of all the trouble, a gatekeeper ruthlessly seized her, at the same time calling to Shatrúghna: 72.5

"Here is the evil, malicious woman! It is her doing that Rama is in the forest and your father has given up his mortal body. Do with her as you see fit."

When he heard this the devoted and sorrowing Shatrúghna cried out to all the servants of the inner chamber: "This is the woman who has brought such bitter sorrow upon my brothers and my father. Let her now taste the fruit of her malicious deed." And with this, he violently seized 72.10

gṛhītā balavat kubjā sā tad|gṛham anādayat.
Tataḥ subhṛśa|saṃtaptas tasyāḥ sarvaḥ sakhī|janaḥ
kruddham ājñāya Śatrughnaṃ vyapalāyata sarvaśaḥ.
Amantrayata kṛtsnaś ca tasyāḥ sarva|sakhī|janaḥ:
«yath" âyaṃ samupakrānto niḥśeṣaṃ naḥ kariṣyati.
S'|ânukrośāṃ vadānyāṃ ca dharmajñāṃ ca yaśasvinīm
Kausalyāṃ śaraṇaṃ yāmaḥ sā hi no 'stu dhruvā gatiḥ.»
72.15 Sa ca roṣeṇa tāmr'|âkṣaḥ Śatrughnaḥ śatru|tāpanaḥ
vicakarṣa tadā kubjāṃ krośantīṃ pṛthivī|tale.
Tasyā hy ākṛṣyamāṇāyā Mantharāyās tatas tataḥ
citraṃ bahu|vidhaṃ bhāṇḍaṃ pṛthivyāṃ tad vyaśīryata.
Tena bhāṇḍena saṃkīrṇaṃ śrīmad|rāja|niveśanam
aśobhata tadā bhūyaḥ śāradaṃ gaganaṃ yathā.
Sa balī balavat krodhād gṛhītvā puruṣa|ṛṣabhaḥ
Kaikeyīm abhinirbhartsya babhāṣe paruṣaṃ vacaḥ.
Tair vākyaiḥ paruṣair duḥkhaiḥ Kaikeyī bhṛśa|duḥkhitā
Śatrughna|bhaya|saṃtrastā putraṃ śaraṇam āgatā.
72.20 Tāṃ prekṣya Bharataḥ kruddhaṃ
Śatrughnam idam abravīt:
«a|vadhyāḥ sarva|bhūtānāṃ
pramadāḥ kṣamyatām iti!
Hanyām aham imāṃ pāpāṃ Kaikeyīṃ duṣṭa|cāriṇīm
yadi māṃ dhārmiko Rāmo n' âsūyen mātṛ|ghātakam.
Imām api hatāṃ kubjāṃ
yadi jānāti Rāghavaḥ
tvāṃ ca māṃ c' âiva dharm'|ātmā
n' âbhibhāṣiṣyate dhruvam.»
Bharatasya vacaḥ śrutvā Śatrughno Lakṣmaṇ'|ânujaḥ
nyavartata tato roṣāt tāṃ mumoca ca Mantharām.
Sā pāda|mūle Kaikeyyā Mantharā nipapāta ha

the hunchback as she stood among her female companions, so that the house resounded with her cries.

Her companions stared with wild consternation at the raging Shatrúghna and then fled in every direction. And they all took counsel together: "In the course of his mad attack he will annihilate us all. Glorious Kausálya is compassionate, generous and righteous. We must take refuge with her. She will ensure our safety."

With eyes coppery red in his fury Shatrúghna, slayer of 72.15
enemies, dragged the howling hunchback over the ground. And as Mánthara was being dragged this way and that, her many-colored pieces of jewelry were shattered in fragments all over the ground. Scattered around the majestic palace the jewelry made it sparkle all the more, like the sky in autumn. In his rage, the powerful bull among men, still holding her in his powerful grip, cried out bitterly, heaping scorn on Kaikéyi. Shatrúghna's bitter and sorrowful words plunged Kaikéyi even deeper into sorrow, and terrified by his threats she sought refuge with her son.

Bhárata glanced at her and called out to the raging Sha- 72.20
trúghna, "If any creature is not to be slain it is a woman. Forbear! I would kill this woman myself, this evil, wicked Kaikéyi, were it not that righteous Rama would condemn me for matricide. If righteous Rághava were to learn that even this hunchback were slain, he would surely never speak to you or me again."

Upon hearing Bhárata's words, Lákshmana's younger brother Shatrúghna checked his fury and released Mánthara. Panting and anguished with sorrow, Mánthara fell at Kaikéyi's feet, lamenting wretchedly. Bhárata's mother looked 72.25

niḥśvasantī suduḥkh'|ārtā kṛpaṇaṃ vilalāpa ca.
72.25 Śatrughna|vikṣepa|vimūḍha|saṃjñāṃ
samīkṣya kubjāṃ Bharatasya mātā
śanaiḥ samāśvāsayad ārta|rūpāṃ
krauñcīṃ vilagnām iva vīkṣamāṇām.

73.1 TATAḤ PRABHĀTA|SAMAYE DIVASE 'tha catur|daśe
sametya rāja|kartāro Bharataṃ vākyam abruvan.
«Gato Daśarathaḥ svargaṃ yo no gurutaro guruḥ
Rāmaṃ pravrājya vai jyeṣṭhaṃ Lakṣmaṇaṃ ca mahā|balam.
Tvam adya bhava no rājā rāja|putra mahā|yaśaḥ
saṃgatyā n' âparādhnoti rājyam etad a|nāyakam.
Ābhiṣecanikaṃ sarvam idam ādāya Rāghava
pratīkṣate tvāṃ sva|janaḥ śreṇayaś ca nṛp'|ātmaja.
73.5 Rājyaṃ gṛhāṇa Bharata pitṛ|paitāmahaṃ mahat
abhiṣecaya c' ātmānaṃ pāhi c' âsmān nara|ṛṣabha.»
Ābhiṣecanikaṃ bhāṇḍaṃ kṛtvā sarvaṃ pradakṣiṇam
Bharatas taṃ janaṃ sarvaṃ pratyuvāca dhṛta|vrataḥ.
«Jyeṣṭhasya rājatā nityam ucitā hi kulasya naḥ
n' âivaṃ bhavanto māṃ vaktum arhanti kuśalā janāḥ.
Rāmaḥ pūrvo hi no bhrātā bhaviṣyati mahī|patiḥ
ahaṃ tv araṇye vatsyāmi varṣāṇi nava pañca ca.
Yujyatāṃ mahatī senā catur|aṅga|mahā|balā
ānayiṣyāmy ahaṃ jyeṣṭhaṃ bhrātaraṃ Rāghavaṃ vanāt.
73.10 Ābhiṣecanikaṃ c' âiva sarvam etad upaskṛtam
puraskṛtya gamiṣyāmi Rāma|hetor vanaṃ prati.
Tatr' âiva taṃ nara|vyāghram abhiṣicya puraskṛtam
āneṣyāmi tu vai Rāmaṃ havya|vāham iv' ādhvarāt.

at the hunchback and began gently to soothe her as she lay anguished and stunned from Shatrúghna's abuse, staring like a trapped curlew.

On the fourteenth day, at the hour of dawn, the 73.1
deputies of the king convened and addressed Bhárata. "Dasha·ratha, our most revered *guru*, has gone to heaven, having first banished Rama, his eldest son, and mighty Lákshmana. O glorious prince, you must become our king this very day. Our kingdom is without a leader, and only by mere chance has it not yet come to harm. Your people and the guildsmen await you, prince Rághava, with all the materials for the consecration in hand. Assume the kingship, Bhárata, the 73.5
great office of your fathers and forefathers. Have yourself consecrated, bull among men, and protect us."

The devoted Bhárata reverently circled all the articles for the consecration and then made this reply to all the people: "It has always been the custom of our House that the kingship passes to the eldest son. You men are aware of this and ought not to ask such a thing of me. Rama, our elder brother, shall be the lord of earth. As for me, I will live in the wilderness for the nine years and five. Let a great army be marshalled, complete with all four divisions; for I myself will bring my eldest brother Rama back from the forest. And all the consecration materials standing ready 73.10
here I will carry in the vanguard as I go to the forest on Rama's behalf. Then and there I will consecrate Rama, tiger among men, and bring him back in the vanguard, like a sacred fire from the place of sacrifice. I will never grant this woman her wish, she who but faintly resembles a mother. I

Na sa|kāmā kariṣyāmi svam imāṃ mātṛ|gandhinīm
vane vatsyāmy ahaṃ durge Rāmo rājā bhaviṣyati.
Kriyatāṃ śilpibhiḥ panthāḥ samāni viṣamāṇi ca
rakṣiṇaś c' ânusaṃyāntu pathi durga|vicārakāḥ.»
Evaṃ saṃbhāṣamāṇaṃ taṃ Rāma|hetor nṛp'|ātmajam
pratyuvāca janaḥ sarvaḥ śrīmad|vākyam an|uttamam:
73.15 «Evaṃ te bhāṣamāṇasya padmā śrīr upatiṣṭhatām
yas tvaṃ jyeṣṭhe nṛpa|sute pṛthivīṃ dātum icchasi.»
An|uttamaṃ tad vacanaṃ nṛp'|ātmaja
prabhāṣitaṃ saṃśravaṇe niśamya ca
praharṣajās taṃ prati bāṣpa|bindavo
nipetur āry'|ānana|netra|saṃbhavāḥ.
Ūcus te vacanam idaṃ niśamya hṛṣṭāḥ
s'|âmātyāḥ sapariṣado viyāta|śokāḥ:
«panthānaṃ nara|vara|bhaktimāñ janaś ca
vyādiṣṭas tava vacanāc ca śilpivargaḥ.»

74.1 Atha bhūmi|pradeśajñāḥ sūtra|karma|viśāradāḥ
sva|karm'|âbhiratāḥ śūrāḥ khanakā yantrakās tathā.
Karmāntikāḥ sthapatayaḥ puruṣā yantra|kovidāḥ
tathā vardhakayaś c' âiva mārgiṇo vṛkṣa|takṣakāḥ.
Kūpa|kārāḥ sudhā|kārā vaṃśa|karma|kṛtas tathā
samarthā ye ca draṣṭāraḥ puratas te pratasthire.
Sa tu harṣāt tam uddeśaṃ jan'|âugho vipulaḥ prayān
aśobhata mahā|vegaḥ sāgarasy' êva parvaṇi.
74.5 Te svavāraṃ samāsthāya vartma|karmāṇi kovidāḥ
karaṇair vividh'|ôpetaiḥ purastāt saṃpratasthire.
Latā|vallīś ca gulmāṃś ca sthāṇūn aśmana eva ca

will live in the trackless forest, and Rama shall be king. Let a road be made by artisans, let the rough sections be levelled out, let guards accompany them, and men to scout out the trackless regions on the way."

When the prince had ended this speech on behalf of Rama, all the people answered him with an earnest prayer for majesty: "May Shri of the Lotus ever attend you for what 73.15
you have spoken here, for your willingness to bestow the earth upon the eldest prince."

When the nobles heard the earnest words the prince uttered for all to hear, tears of joy for him welled up in their eyes and ran down their cheeks. The ministers and members of the council had listened joyfully to his words. Their grief was allayed, and they said to him, "On your orders, best of men, the devoted people and companies of artisans shall be given instructions concerning the road."

Now SURVEYORS and men trained in measurement, pow- 74.1
erful excavators who were zealous in their work; engineers, laborers, craftsmen and men skilled in machinery; carpenters, road-levellers, woodcutters, well-drillers, pavers, caneweavers and capable guides all set out from the city. Proceeding joyfully to the appointed region, that vast flood of people resembled the great rushing tide of the sea under a full moon. The skilled road-builders took their places each 74.5
in his own contingent, and with all their different kinds of tools they set out bright and early. Through vines and creepers and shrubs, through stumps and boulders and all kinds of trees, the workers cut and built a road. In treeless areas some of them transplanted trees, while elsewhere some

janās te cakrire mārgaṃ chindanto vividhān drumān.
A|vṛkṣeṣu ca deśeṣu ke cid vṛkṣān aropayan
ke cit kuṭhārais ṭaṅkais ca dātrais chindan kva cit kva cit.
Apare vīraṇa|stambān balino bala|vattarāḥ
vidhamanti sma durgāṇi sthalāni ca tatas tataḥ.
Apare 'pūrayan kūpān pāṃsubhiḥ śvabhram āyatam
nimna|bhāgāṃs tathā ke cit samāṃś cakruḥ samantataḥ.
74.10 Babandhur bandhanīyāṃś ca kṣodyān saṃcukṣudus tadā
bibhidur bhedanīyāṃś ca tāṃs tān deśān narās tadā.

Acireṇ' âiva kālena parivāhān bahūdakān
cakrur bahu|vidh'|ākārān sāgara|pratimān bahūn
uda|pānān bahu|vidhān vedikā|parimaṇḍitān.
Sasudhā|kuṭṭima|talaḥ prapuṣpita|mahī|ruhaḥ
matt'|ôdghuṣṭa|dvija|gaṇaḥ patākābhir alaṃkṛtaḥ.
Candan'|ôdaka|saṃsikto nānā|kusuma|bhūṣitaḥ
bahv aśobhata senāyāḥ panthāḥ svarga|path'|ôpamaḥ.

Ājñāpy' âtha yath"|ājñapti|yuktās te 'dhikṛtā narāḥ
ramaṇīyeṣu deśeṣu bahu|svādu|phaleṣu ca.
74.15 Yo niveśas tv abhipreto Bharatasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
bhūyas taṃ śobhayām āsur bhūṣābhir bhūṣaṇ'|ôpamam.
Nakṣatreṣu praśasteṣu muhūrteṣu ca tad|vidaḥ
niveśaṃ sthāpayām āsur Bharatasya mah"|ātmanaḥ.

Bahu|pāṃsu|cayāś c' âpi parikhā|parivāritāḥ
yantr' êndra|kīla|parigrāḥ pratolī|vara|śobhitāḥ.
Prāsāda|mālā|saṃyuktāḥ saudha|prākāra|saṃvṛtāḥ
patākā|śobhitāḥ sarve sunirmita|mahā|pathāḥ.
Visarpadbhir iv' ākāśe viṭaṅk'|âgra|vimānakaiḥ
samucchritair niveśās te babhuḥ Śakra|puropamāḥ.

set to work chopping with axes, mattocks and scythes. Others, stronger men, cleared the strong-rooted stalks of beard grass and the more impenetrable areas. Still others took dirt and filled dry wells and gaping holes, while some levelled out the tracts of land wherever it was too steep. Men then 74.10
bridged the areas that needed bridging, pounded those that needed pounding and drained those in need of draining.

In no time at all they enlarged the volume and shape of many streams so that they looked like the sea, and they built various kinds of reservoirs embellished with benches. The road for the army was paved and whitewashed, lined with blossoming trees, sounding with the calls of flocks of wild birds; it was adorned with banners, sprinkled with sandalwood water, ornamented with all sorts of flowers, and it shone with the brilliance of the Milky Way.

Now, certain sites in the loveliest tracts where fruit grew rich and sweet were selected as rest areas for the great Bhárata. The superintendents, diligently following the orders they 74.15
had received, gave orders to beautify these places with special ornamental work till they looked like perfect ornaments. Under auspicious constellations and at auspicious hours the experts laid the foundations for great Bhárata's rest areas.

The workers spread heaps of sand around the sites, built moats to encircle them, erected poles and crossbeams and bars. The sites were adorned with lovely lanes and garlanded with banners. Well-constructed thoroughfares ran through them all. And with their lofty, spire-topped mansions that seemed to wander lost in the sky, they resembled the city of Indra itself.

74.20 Jāhnavīṃ tu samāsādya vividha|druma|kānanām
śītal'|âmala|pānīyāṃ mahā|mīna|samākulām.
Sa|candra|tārā|gaṇa|maṇḍitaṃ yathā
nabhaḥ kṣapāyām amalaṃ virājate
nar'|êndra|mārgaḥ sa tathā vyarājata
krameṇa ramyaḥ śubha|śilpi|nirmitaḥ.

75.1 TATO NĀNDĪ|MUKHĪṂ RĀTRIṂ Bharataṃ sūta|māgadhāḥ
tuṣṭuvur vāg|viśeṣajñāḥ stavair maṅgala|saṃhitaiḥ.
Suvarṇa|koṇ'|âbhihataḥ prāṇadad yāma|dundubhiḥ
dadhmuḥ śaṅkhāṃś ca śataśo vādyāṃś c' ôcc'|âvaca|svarān.
Sa tūrya|ghoṣaḥ sumahān divam āpūrayann iva
Bharataṃ śoka|saṃtaptaṃ bhūyaḥ śokair arandhrayat.
Tato prabuddho Bharatas taṃ ghoṣaṃ saṃnivartya ca
«n' âhaṃ rāj" êti» c' âpy uktvā Śatrughnam idam abravīt:
75.5 «Paśya Śatrughna Kaikeyyā lokasy' âpakṛtaṃ mahat
visṛjya mayi duḥkhāni rājā Daśaratho gataḥ.
Tasy' âiṣā dharma|rājasya dharma|mūlā mah"|ātmanaḥ
paribhramati rāja|śrīr naur iv' âkarṇikā jale.»
Ity evaṃ Bharataṃ prekṣya vilapantaṃ vicetanam
kṛpaṇaṃ ruruduḥ sarvāḥ sa|svaraṃ yoṣitas tadā.
Tathā tasmin vilapati Vasiṣṭho rāja|dharmavit
sabhām Ikṣvāku|nāthasya praviveśa mahā|yaśāḥ.
Śāta kumbhamayīṃ ramyāṃ maṇi|ratna|samākulām
Sudharmām iva dharm'|ātmā sa|gaṇaḥ pratyapadyata.
75.10 Sa kāñcanamayaṃ pīṭhaṃ parārdhy'|āstaraṇ'|āvṛtam
adhyāsta sarva|vedajño dūtān anuśaśāsa ca.

Where the royal road met the Jáhnavi—with its groves of 74.20
different trees, its cool, clear water and shoals of large fish—
it sparkled like the clear vault of heaven at night when the
moon and crowds of stars embellish it. It was a lovely road
every step of the way, built by master artisans.

LATE IN THE night of Nandi·mukha, bards and genealo- 75.1
gists, masters of all the fine points of speech, came to sing
the praises of Bhárata and wish him good fortune. Struck by
golden drumsticks, the drum of the night watch resounded,
while conches by the hundred and high- and low-pitched in-
struments were sounded. The loud sound of pipes seemed
to fill the heavens, though it only brought more lacerat-
ing grief to the grief-stricken Bhárata. On awakening, he
put a halt to the clamor, exclaiming, "I am not the king!"
Then, turning to Shatrúghna, he said: "See, Shatrúghna, 75.5
what great wrong these people are doing because of Kai-
kéyi. And King Dasha·ratha is gone, leaving me all these
troubles. This royal majesty, founded on righteousness, be-
longed to him, the great and righteous king. And now it
is adrift like a ship on the water without a helmsman." So
Bhárata wildly lamented, and as the women watched, they
all broke out in piteous, shrill weeping.

He was still lost in lamentation as glorious Vasíshtha, the
authority in all matters of kingship, made his way to the
assembly hall of the lord of the Ikshvákus. It was a lovely hall
fashioned of gold and richly studded with jewels and gems,
and it looked like Sudhárma as the righteous family priest
entered with his attendants. The master of all the Vedas sat 75.10
down upon a golden bench covered with a costly spread

«Brāhmaṇān kṣatriyān yodhān amātyān gaṇa|ballabhān
kṣipram ānayat' âvyagrāḥ kṛtyam ātyayikaṃ hi naḥ.»
Tato halahalā|śabdo mahān samudapadyata
rathair aśvair gajaiś c' âpi janānām upagacchatām.
Tato Bharatam āyāntaṃ śata|kratum iv' âmarāḥ
pratyanandan prakṛtayo yathā Daśarathaṃ tathā.
Hrada iva timi|nāga|saṃvṛtaḥ
stimita|jalo maṇi|śaṅkha|śarkaraḥ
Daśaratha|suta|śobhitā sabhā
sa|Daśarath" êva babhau yathā purā.

76.1 TĀM ĀRYA|GAṆA|saṃpūrṇāṃ Bharata|pragrahāṃ sabhām
dadarśa buddhi|saṃpannaḥ pūrṇa|candrāṃ niśām iva.
Āsanāni yathā|nyāyam āryāṇāṃ viśatāṃ tadā
adṛśyata ghan'|âpāye pūrṇa|candr" êva śarvarī.
Rājñas tu prakṛtīḥ sarvāḥ samagrāḥ prekṣya dharmavit
idaṃ purohito vākyaṃ Bharataṃ mṛdu c' âbravīt:
«Tāta rājā Daśarathaḥ svar|gato dharmam ācaran
dhana|dhānyavatīṃ sphītāṃ pradāya pṛthivīṃ tava.
76.5 Rāmas tathā satya|dhṛtiḥ satāṃ dharmam anusmaran
n' âjahāt pitur ādeśaṃ śaśī jyotsnām iv' ôditaḥ.
Pitrā bhrātrā ca te dattaṃ rājyaṃ nihata|kaṇṭakam
tad bhuṅkṣva muditāmātyaḥ kṣipram ev' âbhiṣecaya.
Udīcyāś ca pratīcyāś ca dākṣiṇātyāś ca kevalāḥ

and gave his instructions to the heralds. "Go at once and diligently fetch the *brahman*s, *kshátriya*, soldiers, ministers and commanders of the troops. There is urgent business to which we must attend." Soon there arose a tumultuous din as the people began arriving on chariots, horses and elephants. And as Bhárata approached, the subjects called out their greetings to him just as they used to greet Dasha·ratha, the way the deathless gods greet Indra, lord of the hundred rites. The hall was like a pool filled with gems and shells and pebbles, its waters still despite the teeming fish and serpents. And the son of Dasha·ratha lent it such beauty as it had in the past, when Dasha·ratha himself was there.

CROWDED WITH HOSTS of nobles all favorably inclined 76.1
toward Bhárata, the assembly hall appeared to the wise Vasíshtha like a night when the moon is full. As the nobles took their seats according to custom, the hall looked like a full-moon evening when the clouds have vanished. Observing that all the king's subjects were represented in full, the family priest, knowing the ways of righteousness, commenced this gentle address to Bhárata: "My son, King Dasha·ratha went to heaven in the performance of righteousness, after making over to you this prosperous land abounding in wealth and grain. Rama likewise held fast to truth, mindful of the 76.5
righteous ways that good men follow. He could no more cast aside his father's command than the rising hare-marked moon its light. Your father and brother have bestowed on you unchallenged kingship. You must take possession of it and gladden the ministers. Have yourself consecrated at

koṭy'|âparāntāḥ sāmudrā ratnāny abhiharantu te.»

Tac chrutvā Bharato vākyaṃ śoken' âbhipariplutaḥ
jagāma manasā Rāmaṃ dharmajño dharma|kāṅkṣayā.
Sa bāṣpa|kalayā vācā kala|haṃsa|svaro yuvā
vilalāpa sabhā|madhye jagarhe ca purohitam:

76.10 «Carita|brahma|caryasya vidyā|snātasya dhīmataḥ
dharme prayatamānasya ko rājyaṃ mad|vidho haret?
Kathaṃ Daśarathāj jāto bhaved rājy'|âpahārakaḥ?
rājyaṃ c' âhaṃ ca Rāmasya dharmaṃ vaktum ih' ârhasi.
Jyeṣṭhaḥ śreṣṭhaś ca dharm'|ātmā Dilīpa|nahuṣ'|ôpamaḥ
labdhum arhati Kākutstho rājyaṃ Daśaratho yathā.
An|ārya|juṣṭam asvargyaṃ kuryāṃ pāpam ahaṃ yadi
Ikṣvākūṇām ahaṃ loke bhaveyaṃ kula|pāṃsanaḥ.
Yadd hi mātrā kṛtaṃ pāpaṃ n' âhaṃ tad abhirocaye
ihastho vana|durgasthaṃ namasyāmi kṛt'|âñjaliḥ.

76.15 Rāmam ev' ânugacchāmi sa rājā dvi|padāṃ varaḥ
trayāṇām api lokānāṃ Rāghavo rājyam arhati!»
Tad vākyaṃ dharma|saṃyuktaṃ śrutvā sarve sabhā|sadaḥ
harṣān mumucur aśrūṇi Rāme nihita|cetasaḥ.
«Yadi tv āryaṃ na śakṣyāmi vinivartayituṃ vanāt
vane tatr' âiva vatsyāmi yath" āryo Lakṣmaṇas tathā.
Sarv'|ôpāyaṃ tu vartiṣye vinivartayituṃ balāt
samakṣam ārya|miśrāṇāṃ sādhūnāṃ guṇa|vartinām.»

once. Let the sovereigns of the north and west and south, and the westernmost ones who live by the sea, deliver up untold riches to you."

Hearing these words, Bhárata was overwhelmed with grief. Knowing what was right and anxious to abide by it, he turned his thoughts to Rama. With words unclear because of his sobbing and in a voice like the call of the gray goose, the young prince began to lament and to rebuke the family priest in the midst of the assembly:

"The kingship belongs to that wise prince who has practiced chastity, perfected his knowledge, and always striven for righteousness. How would a person like me dare seize it from him? How could a son born of Dasha·ratha usurp the kingship? The kingship, and I myself, belong to Rama. Please see to it that your advice is in keeping with righteousness. Righteous Kakútstha, the eldest son and the best, the equal of Dilípa and Náhusha, must obtain the kingship just as Dasha·ratha did. The other course is an evil one, followed only by ignoble men, and leading to hell. Were I to take it I should become a blot on the House of the Ikshvákus in the eyes of all the world. I do not condone the evil deed my mother has done. Though I am here and he in the trackless forest, I cup my hands in reverence and bow to him. I will go after Rama—he is my king, the best of men. Rághava deserves not only this, but kingship over all three worlds!" When they heard these righteous words, the men of the assembly, whose thoughts were ever with Rama, all shed tears of joy. "If I cannot bring my noble brother back from the forest, then in that very forest will I stay, just like my noble brother Lákshmana. I will use every means in my power to

76.10

76.15

Evam uktvā tu dharm'|ātmā Bharato bhrātṛ|vatsalaḥ
samīpastham uvāc' êdaṃ Sumantraṃ mantra|kovidam:
«Tūrṇam utthāya gaccha tvaṃ Sumantra! mama śāsanāt
yātrām ājñāpaya kṣipraṃ balaṃ c' âiva samānaya.»
Evam uktaḥ Sumantras tu Bharatena mah"|ātmanā
prahṛṣṭaḥ so 'diśat sarvaṃ yathā|saṃdiṣṭam iṣṭavat.
Tāḥ prahṛṣṭāḥ prakṛtayo bal'|âdhyakṣā balasya ca
śrutvā yātrāṃ samājñaptāṃ Rāghavasya nivartane.
Tato yodh'|âṅganāḥ sarvā bhartṝn sarvān gṛhe gṛhe
yātrā gamanam ājñāya tvarayanti sma harṣitāḥ.
Te hayair go|rathaiḥ śīghraiḥ syandanaiś ca mano|javaiḥ
saha yodhair bal'|âdhyakṣā balaṃ sarvam acodayan.
Sajjaṃ tu tad balaṃ dṛṣṭvā Bharato guru|saṃnidhau
«rathaṃ me tvarayasv' êti» Sumantraṃ pārśvato 'bravīt.
Bharatasya tu tasy' ājñāṃ pratigṛhya praharṣitaḥ
rathaṃ gṛhītvā prayayau yuktaṃ parama|vājibhiḥ.

Sa Rāghavaḥ satya|dhṛtiḥ pratāpavān
bruvan suyuktaṃ dṛḍha|satya|vikramaḥ
guruṃ mah"|âraṇya|gataṃ yaśasvinaṃ
prasādayiṣyan Bharato 'bravīt tadā:
«Tūrṇaṃ samutthāya Sumantra gaccha
balasya yogāya bala|pradhānān
ānetum icchāmi hi taṃ vanasthaṃ
prasādya Rāmaṃ jagato hitāya.»

force him to return to the presence of you just, virtuous and honorable noblemen."

With this, righteous Bhárata, who so cherished his brother, turned to the skillful counsellor Sumántra standing by his side and said: "Make haste and go, Sumántra! On my 76.20
authority muster the army at once and give the command for the expedition." So great Bhárata spoke, and Sumántra went off in delight and gave all the orders as he had been directed and had hoped to do. The subjects and the marshals of the army were delighted to receive the command for an expedition to bring Rághava back. The soldiers' wives, too, when they learned of the expedition, were all delighted, and in each and every house they pressed their husbands to hurry. The marshals rallied the entire army, the soldiers, the horses, the fast oxcarts and the chariots swift as thought. Bhárata saw that the army was ready as he stood in the midst 76.25
of his *guru*s. Turning to Sumántra, who was at his side, he said, "Hurry and bring my chariot." He received Bhárata's command in great delight and came forth with a chariot harnessed with splendid horses.

Bhárata Rághava was a courageous prince who held fast to truth and strove to act truthfully. His glorious *guru* was away in the great wilderness, and he was ready to go and beg his forgiveness. The words he spoke were fitting when he said: "Make haste, Sumántra, and go to the leaders of the army to have the troops marshalled. Rama is in the forest, and I mean to beg his forgiveness and bring him back for the welfare of the world." So Bhárata duly commanded the charioteer, and thereby answered Sumántra's every wish. He gave instructions to all the leading subjects, to the heads of

Sa sūta|putro Bharatena samyag
āj̃ñāpitaḥ saṃparipūrṇa|kāmaḥ
śaśāsa sarvān prakṛti|pradhānān
balasya mukhyāṃś ca suhṛj|janaṃ ca.
76.30 Tataḥ samutthāya kule kule te
rājanya|vaiśyā vṛṣalāś ca viprāḥ
ayūyujann uṣṭra|rathān kharāṃś ca
nāgān hayāṃś c' âiva kula|prasūtān.

the army, and to all their many loved ones. And then the men of every household, the *kshátriya*, *vaishyas*, *shudras* and *brahman*s too, made haste and harnessed their camel-carts, their elephants, asses and purebred horses. 76.30

77–87
BHÁRATA IN PURSUIT OF RAMA

77.1 Tataḥ samutthitaḥ kālyam
āsthāya syandan'|ôttamam
prayayau Bharataḥ śīghraṃ
Rāma|darśana|kāṅkṣayā.
Agrataḥ prayayus tasya sarve mantri|purodhasaḥ
adhiruhya hayair yuktān rathān sūrya|rath'|ôpamān.
Nava|nāga|sahasrāṇi kalpitāni yathā|vidhi
anvayur Bharataṃ yāntam Ikṣvāku|kula|nandanam.
ṣaṣṭī ratha|sahasrāṇi dhanvino vividh'|āyudhāḥ
anvayur Bharataṃ yāntaṃ rāja|putraṃ yaśasvinam.
77.5 Śataṃ sahasrāṇy aśvānāṃ samārūḍhāni Rāghavam
anvayur Bharataṃ yāntaṃ rāja|putraṃ yaśasvinam.
Kaikeyī ca Sumitrā ca Kausalyā ca yaśasvinī
Rām'|ānayana|saṃhṛṣṭā yayur yānena bhāsvatā.
Prayātāś c' ārya|saṃghātā
Rāmaṃ draṣṭuṃ sa|Lakṣmaṇam
tasy' âiva ca kathāś citrāḥ
kurvāṇā hṛṣṭa|mānasāḥ:
«Megha|śyāmaṃ mahā|bāhuṃ sthira|sattvaṃ dṛḍha|vratam
kadā drakṣyāmahe Rāmaṃ jagataḥ śoka|nāśanam?»
«Dṛṣṭa eva hi naḥ śokam apaneṣyati Rāghavaḥ
tamaḥ sarvasya lokasya samudyann iva bhāskaraḥ.»
77.10 Ity evaṃ kathayantas te saṃprahṛṣṭāḥ kathāḥ śubhāḥ
pariṣvajānāś c' ânyonyaṃ yayur nāgarikās tadā.
Ye ca tatr' âpare sarve saṃmatā ye ca naigamāḥ
Rāmaṃ prati yayur hṛṣṭāḥ sarvāḥ prakṛtayas tadā.
Maṇi|kārāś ca ye ke cit kumbha|kārāś ca śobhanāḥ
sūtra|karma|kṛtaś c' âiva ye ca śastr'|ôpajīvinaḥ.
Māyūrakāḥ krākacikā rocakā vedhakās tathā
danta|kārāḥ sudhā|kārās tathā gandh'|ôpajīvinaḥ.

BHARATA MADE HASTE, and at that early hour he boarded his excellent chariot and set forth swiftly, eager to see Rama. Before him went all the counsellors and family priests in horse-drawn chariots that resembled the chariot of the sun. Nine thousand elephants marshalled according to precept followed Bhárata, the delight of the House of the Ikshvákus, as he went. Sixty thousand chariots and archers with every sort of weapon followed the glorious prince Bhárata as he went. One hundred thousand horses, each with a rider, followed the glorious prince Bhárata Rághava as he went. Kaikéyi, Sumítra and glorious Kausálya travelled in a resplendent carriage, delighted to be bringing Rama back. 77.1 77.5

Throngs of nobles went along in hopes of seeing Rama and Lákshmana. With delight in their hearts, they held animated conversation about him: "When shall we see Rama, rain-cloud-dark, great-armed Rama, steady of courage and firm of vows, who allays the grief of the world?" "For the mere sight of Rághava will dispel our grief, as the rising sun dispels the darkness of all the world."

The men of the city carried on such heartfelt conversation as this and embraced each other as they made their way along. Every estimable subject, the merchants and all the others, set off in delight to find Rama. Jewellers and master potters, weavers and weapon-smiths, workers in peacock feathers, sawyers, bauble-makers, gem-cutters, workers in ivory, plasterers, perfumers, renowned goldsmiths, blanket-cleaners, bath attendants, valets, physicians, incense-merchants and vintners, washermen and tailors, headmen of villages and hamlets, actors with their women, and fishermen—all were making the journey. 77.10 77.15

Suvarṇa|kārāḥ prakhyātās tathā kambala|dhāvakāḥ
snāpak'|ācchādakā vaidyā dhūpakāḥ śauṇḍikās tathā.
77.15 Rajakās tunna|vāyāś ca grāma|ghoṣa|mahattarāḥ
śailūṣāś ca saha strībhir yānti kaivartakās tathā.
Samāhitā veda|vido brāhmaṇā vṛtta|saṃmatāḥ
go|rathair Bharataṃ yāntam anujagmuḥ sahasraśaḥ.
Suveṣāḥ śuddha|vasanās tāmra|mṛṣṭ'|ânulepanāḥ
sarve te vividhair yānaiḥ śanair Bharatam anvayuḥ.
Prahṛṣṭa|muditā senā s'|ânvayāt Kaikayī|sutam
vyavatiṣṭhata sā senā Bharatasy' ânuyāyinī:
Nirīkṣy' ânutthitāṃ senāṃ tāṃ ca Gaṅgāṃ śiv'|ôdakām
Bharataḥ sacivān sarvān abravīd vākya|kovidaḥ.
77.20 «Niveśayata me sainyam abhiprāyeṇa sarvaśaḥ
viśrāntaḥ pratariṣyāmaḥ śva idānīṃ mahā|nadīm.»
Dātuṃ ca tāvad icchāmi svar|gatasya mahī|pateḥ
aurdhvadeha|nimitt'|ârtham avatīry' ôdakaṃ nadīm.
Tasy' âivaṃ bruvato 'mātyās tath" êty uktvā samāhitāḥ
nyaveśayaṃs tāṃś chandena svena svena pṛthak|pṛthak.
Niveśya Gaṅgām anu tāṃ mahā|nadīṃ
camūṃ vidhānaiḥ paribarha|śobhinīm
uvāsa Rāmasya tadā mah"|ātmano
vicintayāno Bharato nivartanam.

78.1 Tato niviṣṭāṃ dhvajinīṃ Gaṅgām anvāśritāṃ nadīm
Niṣāda|rājo dṛṣṭv" âiva jñātīn saṃtvarito 'bravīt.
«Mahatīyam ataḥ senā sāgar'|ābhā pradṛśyate
n' âsy' ântam avagacchāmi manas" âpi vicintayan?
Sa eṣa hi mahā|kāyaḥ kovidāra|dhvajo rathe
bandhayiṣyati vā dāśān atha v" âsmān vadhiṣyati?
Atha Dāśarathiṃ Rāmaṃ pitrā rājyād vivāsitam
Bharataḥ Kaikeyī|putro hantuṃ samadhigacchati.

And thousands of *brahman*s all together, masters of the Vedas esteemed for their conduct, followed Bhárata in their oxcarts as he went. Everyone was handsomely attired in clean clothing and anointed with pure coppery cream, and on a great array of vehicles they slowly followed Bhárata.

Delighted and cheerful the attendant army followed Kaikéyi's son Bhárata, and soon it came to a halt. Observing the army stop, and seeing the gracious waters of the Ganges, Bhárata addressed all his advisers with these well-spoken words: "Have my army pitch camp anywhere it chooses. 77.20
Straightway tomorrow, when we are rested, we shall cross the great river. As for myself, I wish to go down to the river and offer water to the departed king as part of his obsequies." So he spoke, and all together the ministers replied with a word of assent. Then they ordered each group to pitch camp separately and wherever they pleased. When the army, magnificent with its equipment all arrayed, was encamped along the great River Ganges, Bhárata took up his dwelling and began to ponder how to bring great Rama back.

Now, THE KING of the Nishádas, seeing the bannered 78.1
army encamped along the River Ganges, hurried off at once to speak with his kinsmen. "A great army has appeared here, as vast as the sea. I cannot imagine what its purpose might be, however much thought I give it. There is a huge standard upon a chariot, marked with a *kovidára* tree. Has someone come to take us fishermen captive, or to kill us? Or is it perhaps Bhárata, Kaikéyi's son, marching out to slay Rama Dasha·rathi, whom his father has exiled from

78.5 Bhartā c' âiva sakhā c' âiva Rāmo Dāśarathir mama
tasy' ârtha|kāmāḥ saṃnaddhā Gaṅg"|ânūpe 'tra tiṣṭhata.
Tiṣṭhantu sarva|dāśāś ca Gaṅgām anvāśritā nadīm
bala|yuktā nadī|rakṣā māṃsa|mūla|phal'|âśanāḥ.
Nāvāṃ śatānāṃ pañcānāṃ kaivartānāṃ śataṃ śatam
saṃnaddhānāṃ tathā yūnāṃ tiṣṭhantv ity» abhyacodayat.
«Yadāduṣas tu Bharato Rāmasy' êha bhaviṣyati
s" êyaṃ svasti|mayī senā Gaṅgām adya tariṣyati.»
Ity uktv" ôpāyanaṃ gṛhya matsya|māṃsa|madhūni ca
abhicakrāma Bharataṃ Niṣād'|âdhipatir Guhaḥ.
78.10 Tam āyāntaṃ tu saṃprekṣya sūta|putraḥ pratāpavān
Bharatāy' ācacakṣe 'tha vinayajño vinītavat.
«Eṣa jñāti|sahasreṇa sthapatiḥ parivāritaḥ
kuśalo Daṇḍak'|âraṇye vṛddho bhrātuś ca te sakhā.
Tasmāt paśyatu Kākutstha tvāṃ Niṣād'|âdhipo Guhaḥ
a|saṃśayaṃ vijānīte yatra tau Rāma|Lakṣmaṇau.»
Etat tu vacanaṃ śrutvā Sumantrād Bharataḥ śubham
uvāca vacanaṃ «śīghraṃ Guhaḥ paśyatu mām iti»
Labdhv" âbhyanujñāṃ saṃhṛṣṭo jñātibhiḥ parivāritaḥ
āgamya Bharataṃ prahvo Guho vacanam abravīt:
78.15 «Niṣkuṭaś c' âiva deśo 'yaṃ vañcitāś c' âpi te vayam
nivedayāmas te sarve svake dāśa|kule vasa.
Asti mūlaṃ phalaṃ c' âiva
Niṣādaiḥ samupāhṛtam
ārdraṃ ca māṃsaṃ śuṣkaṃ ca

the kingdom? Rama Dasha·rathi is both my master and my friend. We must champion his cause. Arm yourselves and take up positions here on the bank of the Ganges. All the fishermen are to take up positions along the River Ganges. Guard the river with your troops, provisioning yourselves with meat, roots and fruit. Let the younger fishermen," he exhorted them, "arm themselves and take up their positions, a hundred each on five hundred boats. But should it turn out that Bhárata is not ill-disposed toward Rama, this army of his may safely cross the Ganges today." 78.5

With this, Guha, overlord of the Nishádas, took gifts and fish, meat and wine, and went forth to meet Bhárata. The valiant charioteer observed him approaching, and with the deference in which he was practiced he informed Bhárata. "Here is the chief with a large escort of kinsmen. He is an old friend of your brother's and knows the Dándaka wilderness well. Let Guha then come to see you, Kakútstha. The overlord of the Nishádas will undoubtedly know where Rama and Lákshmana are." When Bhárata heard Sumántra's just words, he replied, "Have Guha come to see me at once." 78.10

Guha was delighted to receive permission, and escorted by his kinsmen he humbly advanced before Bhárata and spoke: "This region is your pleasure garden. You caught us here quite unawares. But we all bid you a welcome stay among our tribe of fishermen. Here are roots and fruit provided by the Nishádas, meat both fresh and dried and a great variety of forest fare. I hope your army will spend the night here—we shall supply it well with food. Then tomorrow, 78.15

vanyaṃ c' ôcc'|âvacaṃ mahat.
Āśaṃse svāśitā senā vatsyatīmāṃ vibhāvarīm
arcito vividhaiḥ kāmaiḥ śvaḥ sa|sainyo gamiṣyasi.»

79.1 Evam uktas tu Bharato Niṣād'|âdhipatiṃ Guham
pratyuvāca mahā|prājño vākyaṃ hetv|artha|saṃhitam:
«Ūrjitaḥ khalu te kāmaḥ kṛto mama guroḥ sakhe
yo me tvam īdṛśīṃ senām eko 'bhyarcitum icchasi.»
Ity uktvā tu mahā|tejā Guhaṃ vacanam uttamam
abravīd Bharataḥ śrīmān Niṣād'|âdhipatiṃ punaḥ.
«Katareṇa gamiṣyāmi Bharadvāj'|āśramaṃ Guha?
gahano 'yaṃ bhṛśaṃ deśo Gaṅg"|ânūpo duratyayaḥ.»
79.5 Tasya tad|vacanaṃ śrutvā rāja|putrasya dhīmataḥ
abravīt prāñjalir vākyaṃ Guho gahana|gocaraḥ:
«Dāśās tv anugamiṣyanti dhanvinaḥ susamāhitāḥ
ahaṃ c' ânugamiṣyāmi rāja|putra mahā|yaśaḥ.
Kaccin na duṣṭo vrajasi Rāmasy' âkliṣṭa|karmaṇaḥ?
iyaṃ te mahatī senā śaṅkāṃ janayatīva me.»
Tam evam abhibhāṣantam ākāśa iva nirmalaḥ
Bharataḥ ślakṣṇayā vācā Guhaṃ vacanam abravīt:
«Mā bhūt sa kālo yat kaṣṭaṃ! na māṃ śaṅkitum arhasi
Rāghavaḥ sa hi me bhrātā jyeṣṭhaḥ pitṛ|samo mama.
79.10 Taṃ nivartayituṃ yāmi Kākutsthaṃ vana|vāsinam
buddhir anyā na te kāryā Guha satyaṃ bravīmi te.»

after we have honored you with all you could desire, you and your soldiers may go your way."

When Guha, overlord of the Nishádas, had spoken, 79.1
high-minded Bhárata made this reasoned and purposeful reply: "Dear friend of my *guru*, you have, in fact, already fulfilled my greatest wish, in that you are willing all on your own to show hospitality to such an army as mine." Such were the earnest words of mighty, majestic Bhárata. And once again he addressed Guha, overlord of the Nishádas. "What way do I take, Guha, to go to Bharad·vaja's ashram? This region is densely forested and the lowlands by the Ganges are hard to traverse." When he heard the 79.5
words of the wise prince, Guha the forest-dweller cupped his hands in reverence and replied: "The fishermen shall go with you, alert and armed with bows, and so will I, glorious prince. But you are not setting out with ill will toward tireless Rama, are you? This great army of yours somehow arouses my suspicions."

Thus Guha addressed him, and Bhárata, who was pure as the sky, replied in an even voice: "May the hour that brings such disaster never come! Please, harbor no suspicions about me. For Rághava is my eldest brother and like a father to me. I am setting forth to bring back Kakútstha, who is living 79.10
in the forest. Do not imagine otherwise, Guha. I am telling you the truth."

Sa tu saṃhṛṣṭa|vadanaḥ śrutvā Bharata|bhāṣitam
punar ev' âbravīd vākyaṃ Bharataṃ prati harṣitaḥ:
«Dhanyas tvaṃ! na tvayā tulyaṃ paśyāmi jagatī|tale
a|yatnād āgataṃ rājyaṃ yas tvaṃ tyaktum ih' êcchasi.
Śāśvatī khalu te kīrtir lokān anucariṣyati
yas tvaṃ kṛcchra|gataṃ Rāmaṃ pratyānayitum icchasi.»

Evaṃ saṃbhāṣamāṇasya Guhasya Bharataṃ tadā
babhau naṣṭa|prabhaḥ sūryo rajanī c' âbhyavartata.
79.15 Saṃniveśya sa tāṃ senāṃ Guhena paritoṣitaḥ
Śatrughnena saha śrīmāñ śayanaṃ punar āgamat.
Rāma|cintāmayaḥ śoko Bharatasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
upasthito hy an|arhasya dharma|prekṣasya tādṛśaḥ.
Antardāhena dahanaḥ saṃtāpayati Rāghavam
vana|dāh'|âbhisaṃtaptaṃ gūḍho 'gnir iva pādapam.
Prasrutaḥ sarva|gātrebhyaḥ svedaḥ śok'|âgni|saṃbhavaḥ
yathā sūry'|âṃśu|saṃtapto himavān prasruto himam.
Dhyāna|nirdara|śailena viniḥśvasita|dhātunā
dainya|pādapa|saṃghena śok'|āyās'|âdhiśṛṅgiṇā.
79.20 Pramoh'|ânanta|sattvena saṃtāp'|âuṣadhi|veṇunā
ākrānto duḥkha|śailena mahatā Kaikayī|sutaḥ.
Guhena sārdhaṃ Bharataḥ samāgato
mahānubhāvaḥ sa|janaḥ samāhitaḥ
sudurmanās taṃ Bharataṃ tadā punar
Guhaḥ samāśvāsayad agrajaṃ prati.

His face beamed with joy when he heard what Bhárata said, and joyfully he replied to Bhárata: "How blessed you are! I know of no one to equal you on the face of the earth. For although the kingship came to you effortlessly, you are prepared to give it up. You are prepared to bring back Rama when he is in such a plight, and for this you shall win everlasting fame throughout the worlds."

As Guha and Bhárata were conversing in this fashion, the sun's light began to fade, and night closed in. After 79.15
their army was encamped and Guha had provided for them generously, majestic Bhárata and Shatrúghna went to bed. But grief brought on by anxious thoughts of Rama troubled great Bhárata—and how little such a man deserved it, one who had always kept his eyes fixed on the way of righteousness. Rághava was consumed with a searing inner blaze; it was like the flame hidden within a tree that a forest fire has scorched. From the fire of grief he broke out in sweat, and the sweat poured down his every limb, like the icy water Himálaya pours down when the sun's rays heat it. The son of Kaikéyi was crushed under a great mountain of sorrow, with its deep gorge of brooding, its minerals of heaving 79.20
sighs, thickets of desolation, numberless creatures of delirium, plants and rushes of misery, and peaks of grief, care and woe. And so high-minded Bhárata, wakeful and utterly distraught, came out with his people to meet with Guha, and again Guha offered him solace over his elder brother.

80.1 Ācacakṣe 'tha sadbhāvaṃ Lakṣmaṇasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
Bharatāy' âprameyāya Guho gahana|gocaraḥ.
«Taṃ jāgrataṃ guṇair yuktaṃ vara|cāp'|êṣu|dhāriṇam
bhrātṛ|gupty|artham atyantam ahaṃ Lakṣmaṇam abravam:
‹iyaṃ tāta sukhā śayyā tvad|artham upakalpitā
pratyāśvasihi śeṣv' âsyāṃ sukhaṃ Rāghava|nandana.
Ucito 'yaṃ janaḥ sarve duḥkhānāṃ tvaṃ sukh'|ôcitaḥ
dharm'|ātmaṃs tasya gupty|arthaṃ jāgariṣyāmahe vayam.
80.5 Na hi Rāmāt priyataro mam' âsti bhuvi kaś cana
m" ôtsuko bhūr bravīmy etad apy asatyaṃ tav' âgrataḥ?
Asya prasādād āśaṃse loke 'smin sumahad yaśaḥ
dharm'|âvāptiṃ ca vipulām arth'|âvāptiṃ ca kevalām.
So 'haṃ priya|sakhaṃ Rāmaṃ śayānaṃ saha Sītayā
rakṣiṣyāmi dhanuṣ|pāṇiḥ sarvaiḥ svair jñātibhiḥ saha.
Na hi me 'viditaṃ kiṃ cid vane 'smiṃś carataḥ sadā
catur|aṅgaṃ hy api balaṃ prasahema vayaṃ yudhi.›
Evam asmābhir uktena Lakṣmaṇena mah"|ātmanā
anunītā vayaṃ sarve dharmam ev' ânupaśyatā:
80.10 ‹kathaṃ Dāśarathau bhūmau śayāne saha Sītayā
śakyā nidrā mayā labdhuṃ jīvitaṃ vā sukhāni vā?
Yo na dev'|âsuraiḥ sarvaiḥ śakyaḥ prasahituṃ yudhi
taṃ paśya Guha saṃviṣṭaṃ tṛṇeṣu saha Sītayā.
Mahatā tapasā labdho vividhaiś ca pariśramaiḥ
eko Daśarathasy' âiṣa putraḥ sadṛśa|lakṣaṇaḥ.
Asmin pravrājite rājā na ciraṃ vartayiṣyati

GUHA THE FOREST-DWELLER then began to describe to 80.1
the exalted Bhárata the fidelity of great Lákshmana. "When
virtuous Lákshmana was keeping his vigil, mounting close
guard over his brother, his splendid bow and arrows in his
hands, I said to him:

'Here is a comfortable bed, my friend, made ready on
your behalf. Lie down and rest in comfort upon it, delight
of the Rághavas. My people are all used to such pains; you
are used to comfort. Righteous prince, we will stay awake
and stand guard over him. There is no one on earth dearer 80.5
to me than Rama, do not be anxious. Would I speak a lie to
your face? Whatever hope I may have in this world for great
glory, for the full acquisition of righteousness or of simple
wealth, I have by reason of his grace. And I for my part, bow
in hand and with all my own kinsmen, will protect my dear
friend Rama as he lies asleep with Sita. I have wandered the
forest all my life, and nothing happens here without my
knowing of it. Moreover, we are prepared to withstand in
battle even an army of four divisions.'

When we had addressed him in this way, great Lákshma- 80.10
na entreated us all, with righteousness alone in view: 'How,
while Dasha·rathi is lying on the ground with Sita, could
I find sleep—or any happiness in life? Look at him, Guha,
reposing with Sita on the grass, a man whom all the gods
and *ásuras* could not withstand in battle. This is the only
one of Dasha·ratha's sons to resemble him in every trait; a
son obtained by means of great austerities and all kinds of
heavy labors. With him in banishment the king will not
long remain alive. The earth will surely soon be widowed.
The women must have cried out their last great cries and

vidhavā medinī nūnaṃ kṣipram eva bhaviṣyati.
Vinadya sumahā|nādaṃ śrameṇ' ôparatāḥ striyaḥ
nirghoṣ'|ôparataṃ nūnam adya rāja|niveśanam.
Kausalyā c' âiva rājā ca tath" âiva jananī mama
n' āśaṃse yadi te sarve jīveyuḥ śarvarīm imām.
Jīved api hi me mātā Śatrughnasy' ânvavekṣayā
duḥkhitā yā tu Kausalyā vīra|sūr vinaśiṣyati.
Atikrāntam atikrāntam an|avāpya mano|ratham
rājye Rāmam anikṣipya pitā me vinaśiṣyati.
Siddh'|ârthāḥ pitaraṃ vṛttaṃ tasmin kāle hy upasthite
preta|kāryeṣu sarveṣu saṃskariṣyanti bhūmipam.
Ramya|catvara|saṃsthānāṃ suvibhakta|mahā|pathām
harmya|prāsāda|saṃpannāṃ sarva|ratna|vibhūṣitām.
Gaj'|âśva|ratha|saṃbādhāṃ tūrya|nāda|vināditām
sarva|kalyāṇa|saṃpūrṇāṃ hṛṣṭa|puṣṭa|jan'|ākulām.
Ārām'|ôdyāna|saṃpūrṇāṃ samāj'|ôtsava|śālinīm
sukhitā vicariṣyanti rājadhānīṃ pitur mama.
Api satya|pratijñena sārdhaṃ kuśalinā vayam
nivṛtte samaye hy asmin sukhitāḥ praviśemahi.›

Paridevayamānasya tasy' âivaṃ sumah"|ātmanaḥ
tiṣṭhato rāja|putrasya śarvarī s" âtyavartata.
Prabhāte vimale sūrye kārayitvā jaṭā ubhau
asmin Bhāgīrathī|tīre sukhaṃ saṃtāritau mayā.
Jaṭā|dharau tau druma|cīra|vāsasau
mahā|balau kuñjara|yūthap'|ôpamau
var'|êṣu|cāp'|âsi|dharau paraṃ|tapau
vyavekṣamāṇau saha Sītayā gatau.»

ceased in exhaustion. The din has surely ceased by now in the king's palace.

I have little hope that Kausálya, the king or my mother will live out this night. Even if my mother should live through it to look after Shatrúghna, Kausálya is so sorrowful that she, who bore this one heroic son, will perish. And my father, who never got the wish that just eluded him, who never installed Rama in the kingship, will perish, too. And when that moment comes, when father passes away and they purify the lord of the land with all the rites for the dead, they will have attained their object. Then they will stroll at their ease through my father's capital, through its lovely squares and well-ordered thoroughfares; with its mansions and palaces, adorned with every precious object; with its teeming elephants, horses, chariots; sounding with the sound of pipes, stocked with every luxury, thronging with delighted and prosperous people, dotted with orchards and gardens, a place of crowded fairs and festivals. If only we might happily return when this period is over, to find him well and his promise fulfilled.' 80.15 80.20

So the night passed with the great prince standing there mourning like this. At daybreak, when the sun grew bright, the two of them matted their hair and went down to the bank of the Bhagi·rathi, where I had them comfortably ferried across. Their hair matted, dressed in garments of bark, carrying splendid arrows, bows and swords, the two princes, slayers of enemies, powerful as bull elephants, glanced back often as they left with Sita." 80.25

81.1 GUHASYA VACANAṂ ŚRUTVĀ Bharato bhṛśam apriyam
dhyānaṃ jagāma tatr' âiva yatra tac chrutam apriyam.
Sukumāro mahā|sattvaḥ siṃha|skandho mahā|bhujaḥ
puṇḍarīka|viśāl'|âkṣas taruṇaḥ priya|darśanaḥ.
Pratyāśvasya muhūrtaṃ tu kālaṃ parama|durmanāḥ
papāta sahasā totrair hṛdi viddha iva dvipaḥ.
Tad|avasthaṃ tu Bharataṃ Śatrughno 'nantara|sthitaḥ
pariṣvajya rurod' ôccair visaṃjñaḥ śoka|karśitaḥ.
81.5 Tataḥ sarvāḥ samāpetur mātaro Bharatasya tāḥ
upavāsa|kṛśā dīnā bhartṛ|vyasana|karśitāḥ.
Tāś ca taṃ patitaṃ bhūmau rudantyaḥ paryavārayan
Kausalyā tv anusṛty' âinaṃ durmanāḥ pariṣasvaje.
Vatsalā svaṃ yathā vatsam upagūhya tapasvinī
paripapraccha Bharataṃ rudantī śoka|lālasā:
«Putra|vyādhir na te kaccic charīraṃ paribādhate?
adya rāja|kulasy' âsya tvad|adhīnaṃ hi jīvitam.
Tvāṃ dṛṣṭvā putra jīvāmi Rāme sa|bhrātṛke gate
vṛtte Daśarathe rājñi nātha ekas tvam adya naḥ.
81.10 Kaccin na Lakṣmaṇe putra śrutaṃ te kiṃ cid a|priyam
putra vā hy eka|putrāyāḥ saha|bhārye vanaṃ gate?»
Sa muhūrtaṃ samāśvasya rudann eva mahā|yaśāḥ
Kausalyāṃ parisāntvy' êdaṃ Guhaṃ vacanam abravīt:
«Bhrātā me kv' âvasad rātriṃ kva Sītā kva ca Lakṣmaṇaḥ?
asvapac chayane kasmin kiṃ bhuktvā? Guha śaṃsa me.»

As soon as he heard Guha's painful words, Bhárata was 81.1
plunged into agonizing thought. That delicate young man, so courageous and handsome, with the shoulders of a lion, great arms and large lotus-shaped eyes, recovered for a moment, but then in profound distress he suddenly collapsed, like an elephant pierced near the heart by goads. Seeing Bhárata in this state, Shatrúghna came close to him, and as he clasped him in his embrace he wept aloud, grief-stricken and nearly insensible. All of Bhárata's mothers flew to him 81.5
then, women already haggard from fasting, desolate and tortured by the calamity that had befallen their husband.

They cried as they gathered around him where he lay fallen on the ground. But Kausálya was most distraught; she edged close to him and clasped him in her embrace. As a loving cow might nuzzle her calf, the poor woman nuzzled Bhárata. Weeping and sick with grief she asked: "My son, you have no illness, have you, that gives your body pain? The life of this royal House now depends on you. To see you, my son, gives me strength to live, with Rama and his brother gone. Now that King Dasha·ratha has departed you are our only defender. You have not heard 81.10
any bad news, have you, about Lákshmana or my son—the only son I have—who has gone to the forest with his wife?" After a moment glorious Bhárata revived and, still weeping, he reassured Kausálya. Then he said to Guha: "Where did my brother, Sita and Lákshmana spend the night? What bed had they to sleep on, what did they eat? Tell me, Guha."

So 'bravīd Bharataṃ pṛṣṭo Niṣād'|âdhipatir Guhaḥ
yad|vidhaṃ pratipede ca Rāme priya|hite 'tithau.
«Annam ucc'|âvacaṃ bhakṣyāḥ phalāni vividhāni ca
Rāmāy' âbhyavahār'|ârthaṃ bahu c' ôpahṛtaṃ mayā.
81.15 Tat sarvaṃ pratyanujñāsīd Rāmaḥ satya|parākramaḥ
na hi tat pratyagṛhṇāt sa kṣatra|dharmam anusmaran.
‹na hy asmābhiḥ pratigrāhyaṃ sakhe deyaṃ tu sarvadā
iti› tena vayaṃ rājann anunītā mah"|ātmanā.
Lakṣmaṇena samānītaṃ pītvā vāri mahā|yaśāḥ
aupavāsyaṃ tad" âkārṣīd Rāghavaḥ saha Sītayā.
Tatas tu jala|śeṣeṇa Lakṣmaṇo 'py akarot tadā
vāg|yatās te trayaḥ saṃdhyām upāsata samāhitāḥ.
Saumitris tu tataḥ paścād akarot svāstaraṃ śubham
svayam ānīya barhīṃṣi kṣipraṃ Rāghava kāraṇāt.
81.20 Tasmin samāviśad Rāmaḥ svāstare saha Sītayā
prakṣālya ca tayoḥ pādāv apacakrāma Lakṣmaṇaḥ.
Etat tad iṅgudī|mūlam idam eva ca tat tṛṇam
yasmin Rāmaś ca Sītā ca rātriṃ tāṃ śayitāv ubhau.
Niyamya pṛṣṭhe tu tal'|âṅguli|travāñ
śaraiḥ supūrṇāv iṣu|dhīḥ paraṃ|tapaḥ
mahad dhanuḥ sa|jyam upohya Lakṣmaṇo
niśām atiṣṭhat parito 'sya kevalām.
Tatas tv ahaṃ c' ôttama|bāṇa|cāpa|
dhṛk sthito 'bhavaṃ tatra sa yatra Lakṣmaṇaḥ
a|tandribhir jñātibhir ātta|kārmukair
mah"|êndra|kalpaṃparipālayaṃs tadā.»

82.1 Tac chrutvā nipuṇaṃ sarvaṃ
Bharataḥ saha mantribhiḥ
iṅgudī|mūlam āgamya

Thus questioned, Guha, overlord of the Nishádas, told Bhárata what sorts of refreshments he had provided for Rama, his dear and kindly guest. "I offered a variety of foods in great quantity for Rama's meal, cooked food and fruit of different sorts. But the truthful Rama refused it 81.15
all. He heeded the code of *kshátriya* and would not accept it. 'It is not for us to take, my friend. Ours is always to give' were the words with which great Rama entreated us, your majesty. Glorious Rághava only drank water, which Lákshmana drew for him, and both he and Sita then fasted. Lákshmana had a little of the water that was left over, and all three, silently and intently, performed the evening worship.

Afterward, Saumítri himself fetched some straw and quickly made a lovely bed for Rághava. Then Rama lay 81.20
down with Sita upon the pallet, and after washing their feet, Lákshmana withdrew. It was at the foot of the almond tree over there, upon that very grass that the two of them, Rama and Sita, slept that night. Lákshmana, however, the slayer of enemies, strapped on palm-guards and finger-guards, bound upon his back a pair of quivers filled with arrows, and holding his great bow strung and ready he stood nearby the whole night through. I then grasped my great bow and arrows, and with my never-tiring kinsmen similarly armed I came and took up my position by Lákshmana, to stand guard over the man who is the equal of great Indra."

AFTER LISTENING ATTENTIVELY to all of this, Bhárata went 82.1
with his counsellors to the foot of the almond tree, and gazing at Rama's bed he said to all his mothers, "Here on

Rāma|śayyām avekṣya tām
Abravīj jananīḥ: «sarvā iha tena mah”|ātmanā
śarvarī śayitā bhūmāv idam asya vimarditam.
Mahā|bhāga|kulīnena mahā|bhāgena dhīmatā
jāto Daśarathen’ ōrvyāṃ na Rāmaḥ svaptum arhati.
Ajin’ ôttarasaṃstīrṇe var’|āstaraṇa|saṃcaye
śayitvā puruṣa|vyāghraḥ kathaṃ śete mahī|tale?
82.5 Prāsād’|âgra|vimāneṣu valabhīṣu ca sarvadā
haima|rājata|bhaumeṣu var’|āstaraṇa|śāliṣu.
Puṣpa|saṃcaya|citreṣu candan’|âgaru|gandhiṣu
pāṇḍur’|âbhra|prakāśeṣu śuka|saṃgha|ruteṣu ca.
Gīta|vāditra|nirghoṣair var’|ābharaṇa|niḥsvanaiḥ
mṛdaṅga|vara|śabdaiś ca sataṭaṃ pratibodhitaḥ.
Vandibhir vanditaḥ kāle bahubhiḥ sūta|māgadhaiḥ
gāthābhir anurūpābhiḥ stutibhiś ca paraṃ|tapaḥ.
A|śraddheyam idaṃ loke na satyaṃ pratibhāti mā
muhyate khalu me bhāvaḥ ‹svapno ’yam iti› me matiḥ.
82.10 Na nūnaṃ daivataṃ kiṃ cit kālena balavattaram
yatra Dāśarathī Rāmo bhūmāv evaṃ śayīta saḥ.
Videha|rājasya sutā Sītā ca priya|darśanā
dayitā śayitā bhūmau snuṣā Daśarathasya ca.
Iyaṃ śayyā mama bhrātur idaṃ hi parivartitam
sthaṇḍile kaṭhine sarvaṃ gātrair vimṛditaṃ tṛṇam.
Manye s’|ābharaṇā suptā Sīt” âsmiñ śayane tadā
tatra tatra hi dṛśyante saktāḥ kanaka|bindavaḥ.
Uttarīyam ih’ āsaktaṃ suvyaktaṃ Sītayā tadā
tathā hy ete prakāśante saktāḥ kauśeya|tantavaḥ.

the ground is where the great man slept that night. Here are the imprints he made.

Rama is a son of Dasha·ratha, that wise and illustrious king, and scion of an illustrious House. He should not have had to sleep on the bare earth. The tiger among men used to sleep on a pile of choice spreads overspread with furs. How is it possible that he slept on the naked ground? Before, 82.5 he always slept in the finest palaces, mansions and summer houses with inlaid floors of gold and silver, amid a profusion of choice spreads, dazzling with bouquets of flowers, scented with sandalwood and aloe—rooms that looked like white clouds, where flocks of parrots whistled. He woke to the sound of singing and musical instruments, the tinkle of gorgeous ornaments, and the roll of splendid bass drums. And panegyrists came at their appointed hour, and a crowd of bards and genealogists, to greet the slayer of enemies with well-suited verses and songs of praise.

No one in the world would ever have believed this; it does not seem at all real to me. Have I lost my wits? Or no, I am certain I must be dreaming. Surely no divine power 82.10 is mightier than Fate, if Rama Dasha·rathi and his beautiful, beloved Sita, the daughter of the king of Vidéha, the daughter-in-law of Dasha·ratha, had to sleep on the ground. This is my brother's bed; this is where he tossed and turned upon the hard surface, crushing all the straw with his limbs. I guess Sita fell asleep on this bed that night dressed in all her jewelry, for here and there you can see bits of gold adhering. Clearly she must have caught her upper garment here that night, for silken threads can be seen adhering still.

Manye bhartuḥ sukhā śayyā yena bālā tapasvinī
sukumārī satī duḥkhaṃ na vijānāti Maithilī.
Sārvabhauma|kule jātaḥ sarva|loka|sukh'|āvahaḥ
sarva|loka|priyas tyaktvā rājyaṃ priyam anuttamam.
Katham indīvara|śyāmo rakt'|âkṣaḥ priya|darśanaḥ
sukha|bhāgī ca duḥkh'|ârhaḥ śayito bhuvi Rāghavaḥ?
Siddh'|ârthā khalu Vaidehī patiṃ y" ânugatā vanam
vayaṃ saṃśayitāḥ sarve hīnās tena mah"|ātmanā.
A|karṇa|dhārā pṛthivī śūny" êva pratibhāti mā
gate Daśarathe svarge Rāme c' âraṇyam āśrite.
Na ca prārthayate kaś cin manas" âpi vasuṃ|dharām
vane 'pi vasatas tasya bāhu|vīry'|âbhirakṣitām.
Na ca prārthayate kaś cin manas" âpi vasuṃ|dharām
vane 'pi vasatas tasya bāhu|vīry'|âbhirakṣitām.
Śūnya|saṃvaraṇ'|ārakṣām a|yantrita|haya|dvipām
apāvṛta|pura|dvārāṃ rājadhānīm a|rakṣitām.
Aprahṛṣṭa|balāṃ nyūnāṃ viṣamasthām an|āvṛtām
śatravo n' âbhimanyante bhakṣyān viṣa|kṛtān iva.
Adya prabhṛti bhūmau tu śayiṣye 'haṃ tṛṇeṣu vā
phala|mūl'|âśano nityaṃ jaṭā|cīrāṇi dhārayan.
Tasy' ârtham uttaraṃ kālaṃ nivatsyāmi sukhaṃ vane
taṃ pratiśravam āmucya n' âsya mithyā bhaviṣyati.
Vasantaṃ bhrātur arthāya Śatrughno m" ânuvatsyati
Lakṣmaṇena saha tv āryo Ayodhyāṃ pālayiṣyati.
Abhiṣekṣyanti Kākutstham Ayodhyāyāṃ dvijātayaḥ
api me devatāḥ kuryur imaṃ satyaṃ mano|ratham!

Perhaps to sleep beside her husband brings such pleasure 82.15
that poor Máithili, delicate child though she is, felt no pain.
But Rághava was born in a House of emperors; he brings
comfort to all the world and is prized by all the world,
and he gave up the highest prize, the kingship. Handsome,
red-eyed, lotus-dark Rághava was destined for pleasure and
deserves no pain. How could he sleep on the ground? Vai-
déhi truly has attained her highest goal by following her
husband to the forest. But we, who are bereft of the great
man, are all thrown into jeopardy. The world has lost its
helmsman, and how empty it seems to me, with Dasha·ra-
tha gone to heaven and Rama withdrawn to the wilderness.

And yet, no one even thinks to advance against our 82.20
treasure-laden land, for the might of his arms protects it still,
even though he is living in the forest. Though the guard-
posts on the ramparts of the capital stand empty, though the
horses and elephants have grown unruly, the city gates stand
wide open and the army is demoralized; though the capital
is unprotected, weakened and vulnerable in its plight, our
enemies dare not covet it, like food prepared with poison.

From this day forward I will sleep on straw spread upon
the ground, eat nothing but fruit and roots, and wear bark
garments and matted hair. On his behalf I will live with
pleasure in the forest for what time remains, taking his
promise upon myself. No falsehood will attach to him. As 82.25
I live there on my brother's behalf, Shatrúghna shall live
with me, while my noble brother protects Ayódhya with
Lákshmana. And in Ayódhya the *brahman*s shall consecrate
Kakútstha. If only the gods allow this wish of mine to come
true! I will bow my head and beg Rághava's grace myself in

Prasādyamānaḥ śirasā mayā svayaṃ
bahu|prakāraṃ yadi na prapatsyate
tato ’nuvatsyāmi cirāya Rāghavaṃ
vane vasan n’ ârhati mām upekṣitum.»

83.1 VYUṢYA RĀTRIṂ TU tatr’ âiva Gaṅgā|kūle sa Rāghavaḥ
Bharataḥ kālyam utthāya Śatrughnam idam abravīt:
«Śatrugh’ ôttiṣṭha kiṃ śeṣe? Niṣād’|âdhipatiṃ Guham
śīghram ānaya bhadraṃ te tārayiṣyati vāhinīm.»
«Jāgarmi n’ âhaṃ svapimi tath” âiv’ āryaṃ vicintayan
ity» evam abravīd bhrātrā Śatrughno ’pi pracoditaḥ.
Iti saṃvadator evam anyonyaṃ nara|siṃhayoḥ
āgamya prāñjaliḥ kāle Guho Bharatam abravīt:
83.5 «Kaccit sukhaṃ nadī|tīre ’vātsīḥ Kākutstha śarvarīm
kaccic ca saha sainyasya tava sarvam an|āmayam.»
Guhasya tat tu vacanaṃ śrutvā snehād udīritam
Rāmasy’ ânuvaśo vākyaṃ Bharato ’pīdam abravīt:
«Sukhā naḥ śarvarī rājan pūjitāś c’ âpi te vayam
Gaṅgāṃ tu naubhir bahvībhir dāśāḥ saṃtārayantu naḥ.»
Tato Guhaḥ saṃtvaritaḥ śrutvā Bharata|śāsanam
pratipraviśya nagaraṃ taṃ jñāti|janam abravīt:
«Uttiṣṭhata prabudhyadhvaṃ bhadram astu hi vaḥ sadā
nāvaḥ samanukarṣadhvaṃ tārayiṣyāma vāhinīm.»
83.10 Te tath” ôktāḥ samutthāya tvaritā rāja|śāsanāt
pañca nāvāṃ śatāny eva samāninyuḥ samantataḥ.
Anyāḥ svastika|vijñeyā mahā|ghaṇḍā|dharā varāḥ

every possible way, but if he should not give in, then I will live with him as long as it takes; if I stay in the forest, he will not be able to ignore me."

IT WAS IN that very place, on the bank of the Ganges, 83.1
that Bhárata Rághava passed the night. He rose at daybreak and addressed Shatrúghna: "Arise, Shatrúghna, why do you lie asleep? Please fetch Guha at once, the overlord of the Nishádas. He will ferry the army across." "I am awake," Shatrúghna replied when his brother accosted him. "I am not sleeping but only musing, just like you, on my noble brother." While the lions among men were conversing in this fashion, Guha paid a timely visit to them. He cupped his hands in reverence and said to Bhárata: "I trust you 83.5
spent a comfortable night on the riverbank, Kakútstha, and that all is well with you and your army." Hearing Guha's affectionate inquiry, Bhárata answered, subordinating all other considerations to Rama: "Yes, we passed the night comfortably, your majesty. You have shown us honor. Now let your fishermen ferry us across the Ganges in their many boats."

Upon hearing Bhárata's instructions, Guha hurried back to the settlement and addressed his kinsmen: "Arise, wake up, my blessings on you ever. Haul down the boats, and let us ferry the army across." So he spoke, and they arose in haste 83.10
and, on instructions from their king, gathered five hundred boats from every direction. Some of them were fine ones distinguished by swastikas and fitted out with large bells, lovely well-built sailboats that easily caught the wind. Guha brought up such a boat, distinguished by a swastika and

śobhamānāḥ patākinyo yukta|vātāḥ susaṃhatāḥ.
Tataḥ svastika|vijñeyāṃ pāṇḍu|kambala|saṃvṛtām
sa|nandi|ghoṣāṃ kalyāṇīṃ Guho nāvam upāharat.
Tām āruroha Bharataḥ Śatrughnaś ca mahā|balaḥ
Kausalyā ca Sumitrā ca yāś c' ânyā rāja|yoṣitaḥ.
Purohitaś ca tat pūrvaṃ gurave brāhmaṇāś ca ye
anantaraṃ rāja|dārās tath" âiva śakaṭ'|āpaṇāḥ.
83.15 Āvāsam ādīpayatāṃ tīrthaṃ c' âpy avagāhatām
bhāṇḍāni c' ādadānānāṃ ghoṣas tridivam aspṛśat.
Patākinyas tu tā nāvaḥ svayaṃ dāśair adhiṣṭhitāḥ
vahantyo janam ārūḍhaṃ tadā saṃpetur āśugāḥ.
Nārīṇām abhipūrṇās tu kāś cit kāś cit tu vājinām
kaś cit tatra vahanti sma yāna|yugyaṃ mahā|dhanam.
Tāḥ sma gatvā paraṃ tīram avaropya ca taṃ janam
nivṛttāḥ kāṇḍa|citrāṇi kriyante dāśa|bandhubhiḥ.
Sa|vaijayantās tu gajā gaj'|ārohaiḥ pracoditāḥ
tarantaḥ sma prakāśante sa|dhvajā iva parvatāḥ.
83.20 Nāvaś c' āruruhus tv anye plavais terus tath" âpare
anye kumbha|ghaṭais terur anye teruś ca bāhubhiḥ.
Sā puṇyā dhvajinī Gaṅgāṃ dāśaiḥ saṃtāritā svayam
Maitre muhūrte prayayau Prayāga|vanam uttamam.
Āśvāsayitvā ca camūṃ mah"|ātmā
niveśayitvā ca yath"|ôpajoṣam
draṣṭuṃ Bharadvājam ṛṣi|pravaryam
ṛtvig|vṛtaḥ san Bharataḥ pratasthe.

84.1 Bharadvāj'|āśramaṃ dṛṣṭvā krośād eva nara|ṛṣabhaḥ
balaṃ sarvam avasthāpya jagāma saha mantribhiḥ.
Padbhyām eva hi dharmajño nyasta|śastra|paricchadaḥ
vasāno vāsasī kṣaume purodhāya purohitam.

covered with a white carpet, a beautiful boat that gave out sounds of festive music. Bhárata boarded it with mighty Shatrúghna, Kausálya, Sumítra and the other wives of the king. Before the women came the family priest and the *brahman guru*s, next the wives of the king, and then the wagons and supplies. As the men loaded equipment, fired 83.15
the camp, and began plunging into the ford, the noise rose up to the highest heaven.

The sailboats, manned by the fishermen, flew swiftly along, transporting the people on board. Some boats were laden with women, others with horses, while still others transported the vehicles and teams and the great treasures. On reaching the farther bank, the fisherfolk helped the people disembark, and as they returned they sailed their boats in lovely formations. The caparisoned elephants were urged on by their drivers, and, making the crossing, they looked like flag-topped mountains. Only some of the people were 83.20
able to board the boats; others crossed on rafts, in tubs or barrels, while still others had only their arms to use. The auspicious army, ferried over the Ganges by the fishermen, struck out at the hour of Mitra for the great forest at Prayága. Thus did great Bhárata allow his army to encamp at its pleasure and to rest, and then he set out in the company of his priests to visit Bharad·vaja, preeminent among seers.

WHEN THE BULL AMONG MEN spied the ashram of Bha- 84.1
rad·vaja only a few miles away, he brought the whole army to a halt and proceeded with his counsellors. Knowing the ways of righteousness as he did, he laid aside his weapons and equipment, and, dressed in a pair of linen garments, he

Tataḥ saṃdarśane tasya Bharadvājasya Rāghavaḥ
mantriṇas tān avasthāpya jagām' ânu purohitam.
Vasiṣṭham atha dṛṣṭv" âiva Bharadvājo mahā|tapāḥ
saṃcacāl' āsanāt tūrṇaṃ śiṣyān «arghyam iti» bruvan
84.5 Samāgamya Vasiṣṭhena Bharaten' âbhivāditaḥ
abudhyata mahā|tejāḥ sutaṃ Daśarathasya tam.
Tābhyām arghyaṃ ca pādyaṃ ca dattvā paścāt phalāni ca
ānupūrvyāc ca dharmajñaḥ papraccha kuśalaṃ kule.
Ayodhyāyāṃ bale kośe mitreṣv api ca mantriṣu
jānan Daśarathaṃ vṛttaṃ na rājānam udāharat.

Vasiṣṭho Bharataś c' âinaṃ papracchatur an|āmayam
śarīre 'gniṣu vṛkṣeṣu śiṣyeṣu mṛga|pakṣiṣu.
Tath" êti ca pratijñāya Bharadvājo mahā|tapāḥ
Bharataṃ pratyuvāc' êdaṃ Rāghava|sneha|bandhanāt:
84.10 «Kim ih' āgamane kāryaṃ tava rājyaṃ praśāsataḥ?
etad ācakṣva me sarvaṃ na hi me śudhyate manaḥ.
Suṣuve yam amitraghnaṃ Kausaly"|ānanda|vardhanam
bhrātrā saha sa|bhāryo yaś ciraṃ pravrājito vanam.
Niyuktaḥ strī|niyuktena pitrā yo 'sau mahā|yaśāḥ
vana|vāsī bhav' êtīha samāḥ kila catur|daśa.
Kaccin na tasy' âpāpasya pāpaṃ kartum ih' êcchasi
a|kaṇṭakaṃ bhoktu|manā rājyaṃ tasy' ânujasya ca.»

proceeded on foot, with the family priest Vasíshtha ahead of him. When he caught sight of Bharad·vaja, Rághava halted his counsellors and advanced behind the family priest. The moment Bharad·vaja saw Vasíshtha, the great ascetic sprang from his seat, calling to his students, "The welcome offering!" Bhárata then did obeisance to him. Since he had come 84.5
in the company of Vasíshtha, the mighty seer knew him to be a son of Dasha·ratha. He gave the two of them the welcome offering and water for their feet, and afterward fruit. Wise in the ways of righteousness he asked them in due order after the welfare of their House, of Ayódhya, their army, treasury, allies and counsellors. But knowing that Dasha·ratha had passed away he did not mention the king.

Vasíshtha and Bhárata asked him after the well-being of his body, his sacred fires, his trees, students, birds and beasts. Bharad·vaja assured them all were well, but then, in his abiding affection for Rághava, the great ascetic addressed Bhárata:

"What is your business in coming here when you should 84.10
be ruling the kingdom? Explain this to me fully, for my mind is unclear on it. The son Kausálya bore, a slayer of enemies and the one source of her delight, has been banished for a long time to the forest with his wife and brother. I am told that his father, acting on the orders of a woman, ordered the glorious prince to become a forest hermit for fourteen years. I trust you have no intention of harming this innocent man and his younger brother, thinking thereby to enjoy unchallenged kingship."

Evam ukto Bharadvājaṃ Bharataḥ pratyuvāca ha
paryaśru|nayano duḥkhād vācā saṃsajjamānayā:
84.15 «Hato 'smi yadi mām evaṃ bhagavān api manyate!
matto na doṣam āśaṅker n' âivaṃ mām anuśādhi hi.
Na c' âitad iṣṭaṃ mātā me yad avocan mad|antare
n' âham etena tuṣṭaś ca na tad vacanam ādade.
Ahaṃ tu taṃ nara|vyāghram upayātaḥ prasādakaḥ
pratinetum Ayodhyāṃ ca pādau tasy' âbhivanditum.
Tvaṃ mām evaṃ gataṃ matvā prasādaṃ kartum arhasi
śaṃsa me bhagavan Rāmaḥ kva saṃprati mahī|patiḥ.»
Uvāca taṃ Bharadvājaḥ prasādād Bharataṃ vacaḥ:
«tvayy etat puruṣa|vyāghraṃ yuktaṃ Rāghava|vaṃśaje.
guru|vṛttir damaś c' âiva sādhūnāṃ c' ânuyāyitā
84.20 Jāne c' âitan manaḥsthaṃ te dṛḍhī|karaṇam astv iti
apṛcchaṃ tvāṃ tav' âtyarthaṃ kīrtiṃ samabhivardhayan.
Asau vasati te bhrātā Citrakūṭe mahā|girau
śvas tu gantāsi taṃ deśaṃ vas' âdya saha mantribhiḥ
etaṃ me kuru suprājña kāmaṃ kām'|ârtha|kovida.»
Tatas «tath" êty» evam udāra|darśanaḥ
pratīta|rūpo Bharato 'bravīd vacaḥ
cakāra buddhiṃ ca tadā mah"|āśrame
niśā|nivāsāya nar'|âdhip'|ātmajaḥ.

85.1 Kṛta|buddhiṃ nivāsāya tath" âiva sa munis tadā
Bharataṃ Kaikayī|putram ātithyena nyamantrayat.
Abravīd Bharatas tv: «enaṃ nanv idaṃ bhavatā kṛtam
pādyam arghyaṃ tath" ātithyaṃ vane yad ūpapadyate.»

So Bharad·vaja spoke, and with tears in his eyes Bhárata replied to him in a voice breaking with sorrow: "I am lost 84.15
if even the holy one thinks such a thing of me! Oh, do not suspect evil of me, do not rebuke me so. I never wanted what my mother demanded on my behalf; it gives me no satisfaction, and I will not accede to her demand. On the contrary, I am on my way to beg forgiveness of the tiger among men, to do obeisance at his feet and to bring him back to Ayódhya. That is the reason I have come—believe me, holy one. Please show me your grace and tell me the present whereabouts of Rama, the lord of earth."

Graciously Bharad·vaja replied to Bhárata, "Such behavior toward your *guru*, such restraint and adherence to the ways of the good, become you, tiger among men, as a son of the Rághava dynasty. I knew what was in your heart and 84.20
only questioned you to hear it openly confirmed and to see your fame magnified to the highest degree. Your brother is living on the great mountain Chitra·kuta. Tomorrow you shall go to that place, but stay here tonight with your counsellors. Grant me this desire, wise prince. You are mindful of the desires and needs of others." Prince Bhárata, a man of noble vision, was overjoyed and replied with a word of assent, for he had decided that he would indeed spend the night in the great ashram.

Once Bhárata, son of Kaikéyi, had decided to spend 85.1
the night there, the sage offered hospitality to him. Bhárata replied, "But surely you have already done as much. The water for our feet and the welcome offering are the

Ath' ôvāca Bharadvājo Bharataṃ prahasann iva:
«jāne tvāṃ prīti|saṃyuktaṃ tuṣyes tvaṃ yena kena cit.
Senāyās tu tav' âitasyāḥ kartum icchāmi bhojanam
mama pritir yathā|rūpā tvam arho manuja|ṛṣabha.
Kim|arthaṃ c' âpi nikṣipya dūre balam ih' āgataḥ?
kasmān n' êh' ôpayāto 'si sa|balaḥ puruṣa|ṛṣabha?»

Bharataḥ pratyuvāc' êdaṃ prāñjalis taṃ tapo|dhanam:
«sa|sainyo n' ôpayāto 'smi bhagavan bhagavad bhayāt.
Vāji|mukhyā manuṣyāś ca mattāś ca vara|vāraṇāḥ
pracchādya mahatīṃ bhūmiṃ bhagavann anuyānti mām.
Te vṛkṣān udakaṃ bhūmim āśrameṣūṭajāṃs tathā
na hiṃsyur iti ten' âham eka ev' âgatas tataḥ.»
«Ānīyatām itaḥ sen" êty» ājñaptaḥ parama|ṛṣiṇā
tathā tu cakre Bharataḥ senāyāḥ samupāgamam.

Agni|śālāṃ praviśy' âtha pītv" āpaḥ parimṛjya ca
ātithyasya kriyā|hetor Viśvakarmāṇam āhvayat.
Āhvaye Viśvakarmāṇam ahaṃ Tvaṣṭāram eva ca
ātithyaṃ kartum icchāmi tatra me saṃvidhīyatām:
Prāk srotasaś ca yā nadyaḥ pratyak srotasa eva ca
pṛthivyām antarikṣe ca samāyāntv adya sarvaśaḥ.
Anyāḥ sravantu maireyaṃ surām anyāḥ suniṣṭhitām
aparāś c' ôdakaṃ śītam ikṣu|kāṇḍa|ras'|ôpamam.
Āhvaye deva|gandharvān Viśvāvasu|Hahā|Huhūn
tath" âiv' âpsaraso devīr gandharvīś c' âpi sarvaśaḥ:
Ghṛtācīm atha Viśvācīṃ Miśrakeśīm Alambusām
Śakraṃ yāś c' ôpatiṣṭhanti Brahmāṇaṃ yāś ca bhāminīḥ

hospitality appropriate to the forest." With a chuckle Bharad·vaja said to Bhárata, "I know you are agreeable and would be satisfied with anything. It is for this army of yours I wish to make provision. This would give me pleasure, and you yourself, bull among mortals, deserve no less. But why in fact did you station the army so far away before coming here? Why did you not approach with your army, bull among men?"

Bhárata cupped his hands in reverence as he replied to the ascetic, "I did not approach with my army, holy one, for fear of the holy one. Spirited horses, men and huge rutting elephants follow in my train, holy one, covering the wide earth. I was afraid they would ruin the land and water, the trees and leaf huts of the ashram, so I came alone." "Bring the army here," the great seer commanded him, and Bhárata accordingly had the army advance.

Bharad·vaja entered the fire-sanctuary, sipped water and wiped his mouth. He then invoked Vishva·karman in order to provide the hospitality. "I invoke Vishva·karman and Tvashtri, too. It is my intention to provide hospitality, and to this end let all these arrangements be made for me: Let the rivers flowing eastward and flowing westward, on earth and in the sky, now come together from wherever they may be. Let some of them flow with date-palm liquor, and some with long-aged wine, others with cool water tasting like the juice of sugarcane. I invoke the *gandhárva*s of the gods, Vishva·vasu, Haha, Huhu, the *ápsaras* goddesses as well, and the *gandhárva* women wherever they may be: Ghritáchi, Vishváchi, Mishra·keshi, Alámbusha, the beautiful

sarvās Tumburuṇā sārdham āhvaye sa|paricchadāḥ.
Vanaṃ kuruṣu yad divyaṃ vāsobhūṣaṇa|patra|vat
divya|nārī|phalaṃ śaśvat tat Kauberam ih' âiva tu.
Iha me bhagavān Somo vidhattām annam uttamam
bhakṣyaṃ bhojyaṃ ca coṣyaṃ ca lehyaṃ ca vividhaṃ bahu.
Vicitrāṇi ca mālyāni pādapa|pracyutāni ca
surādīni ca peyāni māṃsāni vividhāni ca.»

Evaṃ samādhinā yuktas tejas" âpratimena ca
śikṣā|svara|samāyuktaṃ tapasā c' âbravīn muniḥ.
85.20 Manasā dhyāyatas tasya prāṅ|mukhasya kṛt'|âñjaleḥ
ājagmus tāni sarvāṇi daivatāni pṛthak|pṛthak.
Malayaṃ Durduraṃ c' âiva tataḥ Sveda|nudo 'nilaḥ
upaspṛśya vavau yuktyā supriy'|ātmā sukhaḥ śivaḥ.
Tato 'bhyavartanta ghanā divyāḥ kusuma|vṛṣṭayaḥ
deva|dundubhi|ghoṣaś ca dikṣu sarvāsu śuśruve.
Pravavuś c' ôttamā vātā nanṛtuś c' âpsaro|gaṇāḥ
prajagur deva|gandharvā vīṇāḥ pramumucuḥ svarān.
Sa śabdo dyāṃ ca bhūmiṃ ca prāṇināṃ śravaṇāni ca
viveś' ôccāritaḥ ślakṣṇaḥ samo laya|guṇ'|ânvitaḥ.
85.25 Tasminn uparate śabde divye śrotra|sukhe nṛṇām
dadarśa Bhāratam sainyaṃ vidhānaṃ Viśvakarmaṇaḥ.
Babhūva hi samā bhūmiḥ samantāt pañca|yojanam
śādvalair bahubhiś channā nīla|vaidūrya|saṃnibhaiḥ.

women who wait on Shakra and those who wait on Brahma—all these do I invoke to come with Túmburu and with all their trappings. Let Kubéra's heavenly forest come from the land of the Kurus, the forest whose foliage is raiment and jewelry, and which constantly bears fruit in the form of heavenly women. Let the blessed moon come and provide me with the most exquisite food, solid and soft, and things to suck and lick, in great variety and quantity; many-colored garlands, too, dropping from the trees, wine and every other type of drink and meats of different sorts."

So the sage spoke in his deep concentration, incomparable power and ascetic energy, his words accented in full accord with the rules of pronunciation. As he continued 85.20
rapt in meditation, facing east, hands cupped in reverence, one by one all those heavenly things began to appear. A soft breeze began to blow, with a faint touch of the spice hills of Málaya and Dárdura, a most pleasant, comforting and gracious breeze that cooled one's sweat. Heavenly clouds rolled in, showering blossoms, and in every direction could be heard the sounds of the bass drums of the gods. Gentle winds began to blow, troupes of *ápsarases* danced, the *gandhárva*s of the gods sang and their lutes gave forth notes. The sound they sent up carried to heaven and over the earth to the ears of the people, a smooth and even sound with graceful rhythm.

The heavenly sound charmed the ears of the men, and 85.25
when it faded, Bhárata's army beheld the creations of Vishva·karman. The ground had been levelled out all around to a distance of five leagues, and luxuriant lawns carpeted it, glistening like sapphire or cat's-eye beryl. *Bilva* trees sprang

Tasmin bilvāḥ kapitthāś ca panasā bījapūrakāḥ
āmalakyo babhūvuś ca cūtāś ca phala|bhūṣaṇāḥ.

Uttarebhyaḥ Kurubhyaś ca vanaṃ divy'|ôpabhogavat
ājagāma nadī divyā tīrajair bahubhir vṛtā.
Catuḥ|śālāni śubhrāṇi śālāś ca gaja|vājinām
harmya|prāsāda|saṃghātās toraṇāni śubhāni ca.
85.30 Sita|megha|nibhaṃ c' âpi rāja|veśma sutoraṇam
śukla|mālya|kṛt'|ākāraṃ divya|gandha|samukṣitam.
Catur|asram asaṃbādhaṃ śayan'|āsana|yānavat
divyaiḥ sarva|rasair yuktaṃ divya|bhojana|vastravat.
Upakalpita sarv'|ânnaṃ dhauta|nirmala|bhājanam
kXpta|sarv'|āsanaṃ śrīmat svāstīrṇa|śayan'|ôttamam.
Praviveśa mahā|bāhur anujñāto maha|ṛṣiṇā
veśma tad ratna|saṃpūrṇaṃ Bharataḥ Kaikayī|sutaḥ.

Anujagmuś ca taṃ sarve mantriṇaḥ sa|purohitāḥ
babhūvuś ca mudā yuktā taṃ dṛṣṭvā veśma saṃvidhim.
85.35 Tatra rāj'|āsanaṃ divyaṃ vyajanaṃ chatram eva ca
Bharato mantribhiḥ sārdham abhyavartata rāja|vat.
Āsanaṃ pūjayām āsa Rāmāy' âbhipraṇamya ca
bāla|vyajanam ādāya nyaṣīdat saciv'|āsane.
Ānupūrvyān niṣeduś ca sarve mantra|purohitāḥ
tataḥ senā|patiḥ paścāt praśāstā ca niṣedatuḥ.
Tatas tatra muhūrtena nadyaḥ pāyasa|kardamāḥ
upātiṣṭhanta Bharataṃ Bharadvājasya śāsanat.

up on it, woodapples, jackfruit trees and citrons, myrobalans and mangoes, all adorned with fruit.

From the land of the northern Kurus came the forest with its heavenly delights, and the heavenly river with trees densely covering its banks. Splendid four-room houses suddenly appeared, stables for the horses and elephants, clusters of castles and mansions, and lovely archways. And there 85.30
was a royal palace that looked like a silvery cloud. It had a grand archway and was beautified with white garlands and perfumed with heavenly fragrances. It was four-cornered and spacious, complete with couches, chairs and carriages, provisioned with heavenly delights to suit every taste, with heavenly delicacies and garments. It was stocked with all manner of food, with utensils polished spotlessly, seats properly arranged for everyone, and a magnificent couch with a sumptuous spread. It was a majestic residence filled with treasures, and with the permission of the great seer, great-armed Bhárata, son of Kaikéyi, entered it.

Behind him followed all the counsellors and the family priest, and they rejoiced to see the arrangements provided in the residence. There was a heavenly throne in it, a fan and a 85.35
parasol, and with his ministers Bhárata approached as if the king were there. He paid homage to the throne, prostrating himself before Rama, and taking up the yak-tail fan he sat down upon a minister's seat. Then all the others sat down in due order, the counsellors and the family priest, next the chief of the army, and finally the palace supervisor. At Bharad·vaja's command, rivers running with rice pudding instantly sprang up before Bhárata. Along either bank of the

Tāsām ubhayataḥ kūlaṃ pāṇḍu|mṛttika|lepanāḥ
ramyāś c' āvasathā divyā brahmaṇas tu prasādajāḥ.
Ten' âiva ca muhūrtena divy'|ābharaṇa|bhūṣitāḥ
āgur viṃśati|sāhasrā Brahmaṇā prahitāḥ striyaḥ.
Suvarṇa|maṇi|muktena pravālena ca śobhitāḥ
āgur viṃśati|sāhasrāḥ Kubera|prahitāḥ striyaḥ.
Yābhir gṛhītaḥ puruṣaḥ s'|ônmāda iva lakṣyate
āgur viṃśati|sāhasrā Nandanād apsaro|gaṇāḥ.
Nāradas Tumburur Gopaḥ Parvataḥ Sūryavarcasaḥ
ete gandharva|rājāno Bharatasy' âgrato jaguḥ.
Alambusā Miśrakeśī Puṇḍarīk" âtha Vāmanā
upānṛtyaṃs tu Bharataṃ Bharadvājasya śāsanāt.
Yāni mālyāni deveṣu yāni Caitrarathe vane
Prayāge tāny adṛśyanta Bharadvājasya śāsanāt.
Bilvā mārdaṅgikā āsañ śamyā grāhā bibhītakāḥ
aśvatthā nartakāś c' āsan Bharadvājasya tejasā.
Tataḥ sarala|tālāś ca tilakā naktamālakāḥ
prahṛṣṭās tatra saṃpetuḥ kubjābhūt" âtha vāmanāḥ.
Śiṃśap" āmalakī jambūr yāś c' ânyāḥ kānane latāḥ
pramadā vigrahaṃ kṛtvā Bharadvājāśrame 'vasan.
«Surāṃ surāpāḥ pibata pāyasaṃ ca bubhukśitāḥ
māṃsani ca sumedhyāni bhakṣyantāṃ yāvad icchatha!»
Ucchādya snāpayanti sma nadī|tīreṣu valguṣu
apy ekam ekaṃ puruṣaṃ pramadāḥ satpa c' âṣṭa ca.
Saṃvahantyaḥ samāpetur nāryo rucira|locanāḥ
parimṛjya tathā nyāyaṃ pāyayanti var'|âṅganāḥ.

rivers, lovely heavenly dwellings plastered with white clay were produced by the grace of the *brahman*.

And at the very same instant there came twenty thousand 85.40
women sent by Brahma, decked out with heavenly jewelry. Twenty thousand more women came, sent by Kubéra, all adorned with coral, gold, gems and pearls. A troupe of twenty thousand *ápsarases* came from Nándana, who could madden with passion any man they took in their arms. The kings of the *gandhárvas*—Nárada, Túmburu, Gopa, Párvata, Surya·várchasa—began to sing in the presence of Bhárata. And before him danced Alámbusha, Mishra·keshi, Pundaríka and Vámana, at Bharad·vaja's command.

All the garlands to be found among the gods and in 85.45
the Chitra·ratha forest appeared there at Prayága at Bharad·vaja's command. *Bilva* trees became drummers and fig trees dancers, with *bedda*-nut trees beating the time, by the ascetic power of Bharad·vaja. Pines and palmyra trees, evergreens and beeches massed together in delight, becoming hunchbacks or dwarfs. *Shínshapa* and myrobalan trees, rose-apples and all the vines of the woodlands assumed the form of women and took up their dwelling in Bharad·vaja's ashram. "There is wine to drink for all who wish to drink," they cried. "There is rice pudding for those who are hungry and succulent meat to eat, as much as you desire!" The 85.50
women then rubbed the men with oil and bathed them at the murmuring riverbanks, fifteen women for every single man. The eyes of the lovely ladies sparkled bright as they approached and massaged the men, and after drying them off they gave each other things to drink.

Hayān gajān kharān uṣṭrāṃs tath" âiva Surabheḥ sutān
ikṣūṃś ca madhu|jālāṃś ca bhojayanti sma vāhanān
Ikṣvāku|vara|yodhānāṃ codayanto mahā|balāḥ.
N' âśva|bandho 'śvam ājānān na gajaṃ kuñjara|grahaḥ
matta|pramatta|muditā camūḥ sā tatra saṃbabhau.
Tarpitā sarva|kāmais te rakta|candana|rūṣitāḥ
apsaro|gaṇa|saṃyuktāḥ sainyā vācam udairayan:
«N' âiv' Âyodhyāṃ gamiṣyāmo
na gamiṣyāma Daṇḍakān!
kuśalaṃ Bharatasy' âstu!
Rāmasy' âstu tathā sukham!»
Iti pādāta|yodhāś ca hasty|aśv'|āroha|bandhakāḥ
a|nāthās taṃ vidhiṃ labdhvā vācam etām udairayan.
Saṃprahṛṣṭā vinedus te narās tatra sahasraśaḥ
Bharatasy' ânuyātāraḥ «svarge 'yam iti» c' âbruvan.
Tato bhuktavatāṃ teṣāṃ tad annam amṛt'|ôpamam
divyān udvīkṣya bhakṣyāṃs tān abhavad bhakṣaṇe matiḥ.
Preṣyāś ceṭyaś ca vadhvaś ca balasthāś c' âpi sarvaśaḥ
babhūvus te bhṛśaṃ tṛptāḥ sarve c' āhata|vāsasaḥ
Kuñjarāś ca khar'|oṣṭraś ca go|'śvāś ca mṛga|pakṣiṇaḥ
babhūvuḥ subhṛtās tatra n' ânyo hy anyam akalpayat
N' â|śukla|vāsās tatr' āsīt kṣudhito malino 'pi vā
rajasā dhvasta|keśo vā naraḥ kaś cid adṛśyata
Ājaiś c' âpi ca vārāhair niṣṭhāna|vara|saṃcayaiḥ
phala|niryūha|saṃsiddhaiḥ sūpair gandha|ras'|ânvitaiḥ
Puṣpa|dhvaja|vatīḥ pūrṇāḥ śuklasy' ânnasya c' âbhitaḥ
dadṛśur vismitās tatra narā lauhīḥ sahasraśaḥ

The draft animals of the great Ikshváku soldiers—the horses, elephants, asses, camels and oxen, the sons of Súrabhi—were fed with sugarcane and sweet barley by strong men who bade them eat. For the horse trainers ignored their horses and the elephant handlers their elephants; the whole army was delirious with drink and pleasure. Their every desire gratified, anointed with red sandalwood cream, the soldiers shouted out from where they lay with the troupes of *ápsarases*:

"We will never go back to Ayódhya, nor on to Dándaka! May Bhárata fare well, and good luck to Rama too!" 85.55
So the foot soldiers shouted, and the riders and trainers of the elephants and horses, for after such a reception they recognized no master. By the thousand the men of Bhárata's retinue roared in delight and cried out, "This is heaven!" And no sooner would they finish some ambrosial treat than they would glance at the other heavenly foods and turn their thoughts once more to eating.

The female servants and slave girls, the wives and women accompanying the army all found themselves dressed in fresh garments and they too wanted for nothing. The ele- 85.60
phants, asses and camels, the cows and horses, and even the wild birds and beasts were well provisioned, and no one had to provide for any of them. There was not a man to be seen whose garments were not sparkling white, not one who was hungry or dirty or whose hair was begrimed with dust. To their amazement the men beheld thousands of metal pots crowned with flowers and banners, filled to the brim with white rice, goat meat and boar meat, with mounds of choice condiments and fragrant, flavorful soups

Babhūvur vana|pārśveṣu kūpāḥ pāyasa|kardamāḥ
tāś ca kāma|dughā gāvo drumāś c' āsan madhuś|cyutaḥ
Vāpyo maireya|pūrṇāś ca mṛṣṭa|māṃsa|cayair vṛtāḥ
pratapta|piṭharaiś c' âpi mārga|māyūra|kaukkuṭaiḥ
Pātrīṇāṃ ca sahasrāṇi
śātakumbha|mayāni ca
sthālyaḥ kumbhyaḥ karambhyaś ca
dadhi|pūrṇāḥ susaṃskṛtāḥ
yauvanasthasya gaurasya
kapitthasya sugandhinaḥ,
Hradāḥ pūrṇā rasālasya dadhnaḥ śvetasya c' âpare
babhūvuḥ pāyasasy' ânte śarkarāyāś ca saṃcayāḥ
Kalkāṃś cūrṇa|kaṣāyāṃś ca snānāni vividhāni ca
dadṛśur bhājanasthāni tīrtheṣu saritāṃ narāḥ
Śuklān aṃśumataś c' âpi danta|dhāvana|saṃcayān
śuklāṃś candana|kalkāṃś ca samudgeṣv avatiṣṭhataḥ
Darpaṇān parimṛṣṭāṃś ca vāsasāṃ c' âpi saṃcayān
pāduk"|ôpānahāṃ c' âiva yugmān yatra sahasraśaḥ
Āñjanīḥ kaṅkatān kūrcāṃś chatrāṇi ca dhanūṃṣi ca
marma|trāṇāni citrāṇi śayanāny āsanāni ca
Pratipāna|hradān pūrṇān khar'|ôṣṭra|gaja|vājinām
avagāhyasutīrthāṃś ca hradān s'|ôtpala|puṣkarān
Nīla|vaidūrya|varṇāṃś ca mṛdūn yavasa|saṃcayān
nirvāp'|ârthaṃ paśūnāṃ te dadṛśus tatra sarvaśaḥ
Vyasmayanta manuṣyās te svapna|kalpaṃ tad adbhutam
dṛṣṭv" ātithyaṃ kṛtaṃ tādṛg Bharatasya maha|ṛṣiṇā.
Ity evaṃ ramamāṇānāṃ devānām iva Nandane
Bharadvāj'|āśrame ramye sā rātrir vyatyavartata
Pratijagmuś ca tā nadyo gandharvāś ca yath"|āgatam
Bharadvājam anujñāpya tāś ca sarvā var'|âṅganāḥ

prepared from fruit stock. Along the edges of the forest were wells thick with rice pudding; there were wishing-cows, too, and trees dripping with honey. There were pools filled with 85.65
date-palm wine and ringed about with mounds of savory meats prepared in steaming cauldrons—venison, peacock and chicken. There were thousands of platters made of gold, and well-fired trays and jars and jugs filled with curds. There were ponds filled with buttermilk scented with fresh yellow woodapple, filled with white curds or rice pudding, and there were mounds of sugar.

At the landing places on the river the men beheld ointments and fragrant powders and bathing requisites, all stored in containers. There were stacks of toothbrushes, white and bristled, white sandalwood ointment packed in vials, and 85.70
sparkling clean mirrors. There were piles of clothing and pairs of shoes and sandals by the thousand. There were collyrium boxes, combs and brushes; parasols, bows and shining armor; couches and chairs. There were full streams for watering the asses, camels, elephants and horses, and streams just right for bathing, with lovely landings, lotuses and water lilies. All about they saw mounds of soft barley-grass the color of sapphire or cat's-eye beryl for strewing before the animals. The men were lost in wonder at the sight of the marvelous hospitality—like something in a dream—that the great seer provided for Bhárata.

And while they were enjoying themselves like this in Bha- 85.75
rad·vaja's lovely ashram, just like the gods in Nándana, the night slipped away. Then the rivers, the *gandhárva*s and all the lovely women took leave of Bharad·vaja and returned just as they had come. But the men were still drunk and

Tath" âiva mattā madir'|ôtkaṭā narās
tath" âiva divy'|âguru|candan'|ôkṣitāḥ
tath" âiva divyā vividhāḥ srag|uttamāḥ
pṛthak|prakīrṇā manujaiḥ pramarditāḥ.

86.1 TATAS TĀṂ RAJANĪM uṣya Bharataḥ sapariccha dadaḥ
kṛt'|âtithyo Bharadvājaṃ kāmād abhijagāma ha.
Tam ṛṣiḥ puruṣa|vyāghraṃ prekṣya prāñjalim āgatam
hut'|âgni|hotro Bharataṃ Bharadvājo 'bhyabhāṣata:
«Kaccid atra sukhā rātris tav' âsmad|viṣaye gatā?
samagras te janaḥ kaccid ātithye śaṃsa me 'nagha?»
Tam uvāc' āñjaliṃ kṛtvā Bharato 'bhipraṇamya ca
āśramād abhiniṣkrantam ṛṣim uttama|tejasaṃ:
86.5 «Sukh'|ôṣito 'smi bhagavan samagra|bala|vāhanaḥ
tarpitaḥ sarva|kāmaiś ca s'|âmātyo balavat tvayā.
Apeta|klama|saṃtāpāḥ subhakṣyāḥ supratiśrayāḥ
api preṣyān upādāya sarve sma susukh'|ôṣitāḥ.
Āmantraye 'haṃ bhagavan kāmaṃ tvām ṛṣi|sattama
samīpaṃ prasthitaṃ bhrātur m" āireṇ' ēkṣasva cakṣuṣā.
Āśramaṃ tasya dharmajña dhārmikasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
ācakṣva katamo mārgaḥ kiyān iti ca śaṃsa me.»
Iti pṛṣṭas tu Bharataṃ bhrātṛ|darśana|lālasaṃ
pratyuvāca mahā|tejā Bharadvājo mahā|tapāḥ.
86.10 «Bharat' ârdhatṛtīyeṣu yojaneṣv ajane vane
Citrakūṭo giris tatra ramya|nirdara|kānanaḥ.

wild with liquor, still anointed with the heavenly creams of aloe and sandalwood, and the heavenly garlands were still there, the various splendid garlands, though now in disarray and crushed by the men.

After passing the night with such hospitality shown to him, Bhárata went with his escort and of his own accord approached Bharad·vaja. Bharad·vaja had completed his fire offerings when he observed that Bhárata, tiger among men, had come with hands cupped in reverence. The seer addressed him: "I trust you spent a pleasant night here in our domain. Were your people content with the hospitality? Tell me, blameless prince." The supremely powerful seer strode from his ashram, and Bhárata, hands cupped in reverence, prostrated himself and replied: "I, my ministers and all my army, and even the draft animals, have passed the night quite pleasantly, holy one. You have gratified most amply our every desire. We have been well fed and well housed, and our fatigue and pain have been allayed. Yes, all of us, the servants included, have passed the night most pleasantly. And though I must now bid you farewell, holy one, foremost of seers, please turn a friendly eye upon me as I set out to find my brother. Direct me to the ashram of my great and righteous brother. Tell me which road to take, righteous seer, and how far I must go." 86.1 86.5

Questioned in this fashion, Bharad·vaja, the great and mighty ascetic, answered Bhárata, who was yearning for the sight of his brother. "Bhárata, at a distance of two and a half leagues through the lonely forest is Mount Chitra·kuta, 86.10

Uttaraṃ pārśvam āsādya tasya Mandākinī nadī
puṣpita|druma|saṃchannā ramya|puṣpita|kānanā.
Anantaraṃ tat saritaś Citrakūṭaṃ ca parvatam
tato parṇa|kuṭī tāta tatra tau vasato dhruvam.
Dakṣiṇen' âiva mārgeṇa savya|dakṣiṇam eva ca
gaja|vāji|rath'|ākīrṇāṃ vāhinīṃ vāhinī|pate
vāhayasva mahā|bhāga tato drakṣyasi Rāghavam.»

Prayāṇam iti ca śrutvā rāja|rājasya yoṣitaḥ
hitvā yānāni yān'|ârhā brāhmaṇaṃ paryavārayan.
86.15 Vepamānā kṛśā dīnā saha devyā Sumantriyā
Kausalyā tatra jagrāha karābhyāṃ caraṇau muneḥ.
A|samṛddhena kāmena sarva|lokasya garhitā
Kaikeyī tasya jagrāha caraṇau sa|vyapatrapā.
Taṃ pradakṣiṇam āgamya bhagavantaṃ mahā|munim
a|dūrād Bharatasy' âiva tasthau dīnamanās tadā.
Tataḥ papraccha Bharataṃ Bharadvājo dṛḍha|vrataḥ:
»viśeṣaṃ jñātum icchāmi mātṝṇāṃ tava Rāghava.«

Evam uktas tu Bharato Bharadvājena dhārmikaḥ
uvāca prāñjalir bhūtvā vākyaṃ vacana|kovidaḥ:
86.20 «Yām imāṃ bhagavan dīnāṃ śokān aśana|karśitām
pitur hi mahiṣīṃ devīṃ devatām iva paśyasi.
Eṣā taṃ puruṣa|vyāghraṃ siṃha|vikrānta|gāminam
Kausalyā suṣuve Rāmaṃ Dhātāram Aditir yathā.
Asyā vāma|bhujaṃ śliṣṭā y" âiṣā tiṣṭhati durmanāḥ
karṇikārasya śākh" êva śīrṇa|puṣpā van'|ântare.

a place of lovely caverns and woodlands. Along its northern flank runs the Mandákini River, thickly bordered with flowering trees and lovely flowering woodlands. Between the stream and Mount Chitra·kuta their leaf-hut will be standing, my son. I am certain the two of them are living there. Illustrious lord of the army, if you lead your army of elephants, horses and chariots by way of the southern road, keeping toward the southwest, you will soon see Rághava."

When the wives of the king of kings heard they were about to depart, they left their fine carriages—and fine carriages they always deserved—and crowded around the *brahman* Bharad·vaja. Trembling, haggard and desolate, Kausálya along with Queen Sumítra grasped the sage's feet with her hands. Kaikéyi, her every desire thwarted, an object of contempt to all the world, was overcome with shame as she, too, grasped his feet. Reverently she circled the great and holy sage and with a desolate heart stood apart, not far from Bhárata. Then Bharad·vaja, a sage strict in his vows, made a request of Bhárata: "I should like to make the acquaintance of your mothers individually, Rághava." 86.15

So Bharad·vaja spoke, and the righteous and eloquent Bhárata cupped his hands in reverence and spoke these words: "This woman whom you see, holy one, who is like a goddess though desolate now and haggard with grief and fasting, is Kausálya, my father's chief queen. It is she who bore Rama, the tiger among men who moves with the gait of a lion, as Áditi bore Dhatri. The woman holding her by the left arm, with as wretched a look as a *karni·kara* branch stripped of its blossoms in the heart of the forest, is the 86.20

Etasyās tau sutau devyāḥ kumārau deva|varṇinau
ubhau Lakṣmaṇa|Śatrughnau vīrau satya|parākramau.
Yasyāḥ kṛte nara|vyāghrau jīva|nāśam ito gatau
rājā putra|vihīnaś ca svargaṃ Daśaratho gataḥ.
Aiśvarya|kāmāṃ Kaikeyīm an|āryām ārya|rūpiṇīm
mam' âitāṃ mātaraṃ viddhi nṛśaṃsāṃ pāpa|niścayām
yato|mūlaṃ hi paśyāmi vyasanaṃ mahad ātmanaḥ.»
Ity uktvā nara|śārdūlo bāṣpa|gadgadayā girā
sa niśaśvāsa tāmr'|âkṣo kruddho nāga iv' âsakṛt.

Bharadvājo maha|ṛṣis taṃ bruvantaṃ Bharataṃ tadā
pratyuvāca mahā|buddhir idaṃ vacanam arthavat:
«Na doṣeṇ' âvagantavyā Kaikeyī Bharata tvayā
Rāma|pravrājanaṃ hy etat sukh'|ôdarkaṃ bhaviṣyati.»

Abhivādya tu saṃsiddhaḥ kṛtvā c' âinaṃ pradakṣiṇam
āmantrya Bharataḥ sainyaṃ «yujyatām ity» acodayat.
Tato vāji|rathān yuktvā divyān hema|pariṣkritān
adhyārohat prayāṇ'|ârthī bahūn bahu|vidho janaḥ.
Gaja|kanyā|gajāś c' âiva hema|kakṣyāḥ patākinaḥ
jīmūtā iva gharm'|ânte sa|ghoṣāḥ saṃpratasthire.
Vividhāny api yānāni mahānti ca laghūni ca
prayayuḥ sumah"|ârhāṇi pādair eva padātayaḥ.
Atha yāna|pravekais tu Kausalyā|pramukhāḥ striyaḥ
Rāma|darśanakāṅkṣiṇyaḥ prayayur muditās tadā.
Sa c' ârka|taruṇ'|ābhāsāṃ niyuktāṃ śibikāṃ śubhām
āsthāya prayayau śrīmān Bharataḥ sa|paricchadaḥ.
Sā prayātā mahā|senā gaja|vāji|rath'|ākulā

queen whose sons are the godlike Lákshmana and Shatrúghna, mighty and valorous princes. She on whose account the two tigers among men went away dead in life, on whose account King Dasha·ratha was bereft of his sons and so went to heaven—behold her, the power-hungry Kaikéyi, an ignoble woman in a noblewoman's guise, a vicious and malevolent person—my mother, and the one in whom I see this great calamity of mine to have its source." The tiger among men stopped, his voice choked with sobs, his eyes bloodshot, fitfully heaving sighs like an angry snake.

When Bhárata had finished speaking, the great and wise seer Bharad·vaja replied with words of great import: "Bhárata, you must not impute any fault to Kaikéyi. The banishment of Rama will turn out to be a great blessing."

Bhárata did obeisance and received his benediction, and after reverently circling and taking leave of him, he commanded the army, "Harness up!" The different groups of people then harnessed the many heavenly horse-chariots with fittings of gold, and they boarded, eager to be off. The elephants, both bulls and cows, girt with gold, their pennants flying, set forth with a rumble, like clouds at the end of summer. The different kinds of vehicles set forth, large ones and small ones and some of great value, while the foot soldiers set out on foot. Eager to see Rama, the women, with Kausálya at their head, set forth cheerfully in their distinguished vehicles. A handsome palanquin was standing ready, resplendent as the morning sun, and majestic Bhárata got in and set forth with his escort. Teeming with elephants, horses and chariots, the great army, like a massive lofty cloud, set forth turning southward, traversing

dakṣiṇāṃ diśam āvṛtya mahā|megha iv' ôtthitaḥ
vanāni tu vyatikramya juṣṭāni mṛga|pakṣibhiḥ.
Sā saṃprahṛṣṭa|dvipa|vāji|yodhā
vitrāsayantī mṛga|pakṣi|saṃghān
mahad vanaṃ tat pravigāhamānā
rarāja senā Bharatasya tatra.

87.1 Tayā mahatyā yāyinyā dhvajinyā vana|vāsinaḥ
arditā yūthapā mattāḥ sa|yūthāḥ saṃpradudruvuḥ.
Ṛkṣāḥ pṛṣata|saṃghāś ca ruravaś ca samantataḥ
dṛśyante vana|rājīṣu giriṣv api nadīṣu ca.
Sa saṃpratasthe dharm'|ātmā prīto Daśarath'|ātmajaḥ
vṛto mahatyā nādinyā senayā catur|aṅgayā.
Sāgar'|âugha|nibhā senā Bharatasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
mahīṃ saṃchādayām āsa prāvṛṣi dyām iv' âmbudaḥ.
87.5 Turaṃg'|âughair avatatā vāraṇaiś ca mahā|javaiḥ
an|ālakṣyā ciraṃ kālaṃ tasmin kāle babhūva bhūḥ.
Sa yātvā dūram adhvānaṃ supariśrānta|vāhanaḥ
uvāca Bharataḥ śrīmān Vasiṣṭhaṃ mantriṇāṃ varam:
«Yādṛśaṃ lakṣyate rūpaṃ yathā c' âiva śrutaṃ mayā
vyaktaṃ prāptāḥ sma taṃ deśaṃ Bharadvājo yam abravīt:
Ayaṃ giriś Citrakūṭas tathā Mandākinī nadī
etat prakāśate dūrān nīla|megha|nibhaṃ vanam
Gireḥ sānūni ramyāṇi Citrakūṭasya saṃprati
vāraṇair avamṛdyante māmakaiḥ parvat'|ôpamaiḥ
87.10 Muñcanti kusumāny ete nagāḥ parvata|sānuṣu
nīlā iv' ātap'|âpāye toyaṃ toya|dharā ghanāḥ

stretches of forest alive with birds and beasts. Its soldiers, elephants and horses all excited, terrifying the flocks of birds and beasts as it plunged into the great forest, the army of Bhárata made a splendid sight.

87.1 As THE GREAT bannered army was making its way, the wild bull elephants that lived in the forest were thrown into confusion and ran off with their herds. So, too, were the monkeys and droves of dappled gazelle and black antelope that were everywhere to be seen in the stretches of the forest, on the mountains, and at the riverbanks. The righteous son of Dasha·ratha happily proceeded in the company of his great and clamorous army of four divisions. Great Bhárata's army was like the ocean's flood, or the clouds that blanket heaven in the rains, the way it blanketed the earth.
87.5 For the earth was inundated with a flood of swift horses and elephants, and for a long time it disappeared altogether from sight.

Majestic Bhárata had covered a great distance, and his mounts had grown weary when he addressed Vasíshtha, the best of counsellors: "We have clearly come to the region Bharad·vaja spoke of: the scene that appears before us is just as I heard it described. Here are Mount Chitra·kuta and the Mandákini River, and there, at a distance, the forest can be seen, blue-black as a storm cloud. Even now my elephants, mountain-like themselves, are trampling the
87.10 lovely slopes of Mount Chitra·kuta. The trees upon the mountain slopes are shedding their blossoms, as blue-black water-laden clouds shed water when the heat of summer is over. Just look at the mountain, Shatrúghna. It is a place

Kinnar'|ācarit'|ôddeśaṃ paśya Śatrughna parvatam
hayaiḥ samantād ākīrṇaṃ makarair iva sāgaram
Ete mṛga|gaṇā bhānti śīghra|vegāḥ pracoditāḥ
vāyu|praviddhāḥ śaradi megha|rājya iv' âmbare
Kurvanti kusum'|āpīḍāñ śiraḥsu surabhīn amī
megha|prakāśaiḥ phalakair dākṣiṇātyā yathā narāḥ

Niṣkūjam iva bhūtv" êdaṃ vanaṃ ghora|pradarśanam
Ayodhy" eva jan'|ākīrṇā saṃprati pratibhāti mā.
87.15 Khurair udīrito reṇur divaṃ pracchādya tiṣṭhati
taṃ vahaty anilaḥ śīghraṃ kurvann iva mama priyam.
Syandanāṃs turag'|ôpetān sūta|mukhyair adhiṣṭhitān
etān saṃpatataḥ śīghraṃ paśya Śatrughna kānane.
Etān vitrāsitān paśya barhiṇaḥ priya|darśanān
etam āviśataḥ śailam adhivāsaṃ patatriṇām.
Atimātram ayaṃ deśo manojñaḥ pratibhāti mā
tāpasānāṃ nivāso 'yaṃ vyaktaṃ svarga|patho yathā.
Mṛgā mṛgībhiḥ sahitā bahavaḥ pṛṣatā vane
manojña|rūpā lakṣyante kusumair iva citritaḥ.
87.20 Sādhu sainyāḥ pratiṣṭhantāṃ vicinvantu ca kānanam
yathā tau puruṣa|vyāghrau dṛśyete Rāma|Lakṣmaṇau.»

Bharatasya vacaḥ śrutvā puruṣāḥ śastra|pāṇayaḥ
viviśus tad vanaṃ śūrā dhūmaṃ ca dadṛśus tataḥ.
Te samālokya dhūm'|âgram ūcur Bharatam āgatāḥ:
«n' âmanuṣye bhavaty agnir vyaktam atr' âiva Rāghavau.
Atha n' âtra nara|vyāghrau rāja|putrau paraṃ|tapau
anye Rām'|ôpamāḥ santi vyaktam atra tapasvinaḥ.»

where *kínnaras* roam, and now the horses are swarming over it like dolphins through the ocean. Startled herds of deer are darting off—they look like banks of clouds in the sky shredded by the autumn wind. The trees, with their cloud-dark branches and the fragrant flower-chaplets they wear upon their crowns, look like men of the south.

The forest had been still and dreadful in appearance, but now, with all these throngs of people, it seems like Ayódhya to me. The dust kicked up by hoofs hung obscuring the sky, 87.15
but a breeze has come and quickly dispelled it, as if to do me a kindness. Look, Shatrúghna, how the master charioteers drive the horse-drawn carriages and how they fly along so swiftly through the woodlands. And now those lovely peacocks—look, they are frightened and scurrying off to the mountain, the dwelling place of birds. I find this a perfectly charming spot, clearly a place where ascetics would live—it is like the very pathway to heaven. The many charming dappled deer with their mates in the forest appear as if it were the blossoms that lent them their brilliant coloring. Come, 87.20
let soldiers set out and search the woodland, to see if those tigers among men, Rama and Lákshmana, are anywhere to be found."

Receiving Bhárata's order, warriors with weapons in hand entered the forest and soon caught sight of smoke. On observing the column of smoke, they returned and reported it to Bhárata. "Where there is fire there must be men," they said. "Clearly the two Rághavas are somewhere nearby. Then again, those tigers among men, the two enemy-slaying princes, may not be here, but others clearly are, ascetics like Rama." Hearing these just and reasonable words, Bhárata,

Tac chrutvā Bharatas teṣāṃ vacanaṃ sādhu saṃmatam
sainyān uvāca sarvāṃs tān amitra|bala|mardanaḥ:
87.25 «Yat tā bhavantas tiṣṭhantu n' êto gantavyam agrataḥ
aham eva gamiṣyāmi Sumantro gurur eva ca.»
Evam uktās tataḥ sarve tatra tasthuḥ samantataḥ
Bharato yatra dhūm'|âgraṃ tatra dṛṣṭiṃ samādadhat.
Vyavasthitā yā Bharatena sā camūr
nirīkṣamāṇ" âpi ca dhūmam agrataḥ
babhūva hṛṣṭā nacireṇa jānatī
priyasya Rāmasya samāgamaṃ tadā.

crusher of enemy armies, addressed all the soldiers: "Remain here and be on the alert; no one is to go on ahead, I myself shall go with Sumántra and our *guru*." So he spoke, and all of them remained where they were, while Bhárata directed his gaze toward the column of smoke. The army, too, from where Bhárata had made them halt, gazed at the smoke that rose before them and felt delight, thinking it would not be long before they rejoined their beloved Rama. 87.25

88–103
RAMA IS RESOLVED

88.1 Dīrgha|kāl'|ôṣitas tasmin
girau giri|vana|priyaḥ
Videhyāḥ priyam ākāṅkṣan
svaṃ ca cittaṃ vilobhayan.
Atha Dāśarathiś citraṃ Citrakūṭam adarśayat
bhāryām amara|saṃkāśaḥ Śacīm iva Puraṃ|daraḥ.
«Na rājyād bhraṃśanaṃ bhadre
na suhṛdbhir vinā|bhavaḥ
mano me bādhate dṛṣṭvā
ramaṇīyam imaṃ girim.
Paśy' êmam acalaṃ bhadre nānā|dvija|gaṇ'|āyutam
śikharaiḥ kham iv' ôdviddhair dhātumadbhir vibhūṣitam.
88.5 Ke cid rajata|saṃkāśāḥ ke cit kṣataja|saṃnibhāḥ
pīta|māñjiṣṭha|varṇāś ca ke cin maṇi|vara|prabhāḥ.
Puṣy'|ârka|ketuk'|ābhāś ca ke cij jyotī|rasa|prabhāḥ
virājante 'cal'|êndrasya deśā dhātu|vibhūṣitāḥ.
Nānā|mṛga|gaṇa|dvīpi|tarakṣv|ṛkṣa|gaṇair vṛtaḥ
aduṣṭair bhāty ayaṃ śailo bahu|pakṣi|samākulaḥ.
Āmra|jambv|asanair lodhraiḥ priyālaiḥ panasair dhavaiḥ
aṅkolair bhavya|tiniśair bilva|tinduka|veṇubhiḥ.
Kāśmary|ariṣṭa|varaṇair madhūkais tilakais tathā
badary|āmalakair nīpair vetra|dhanvana|bījakaiḥ.
88.10 Puṣpavadbhiḥ phal'|ôpetaiś chāyāvadbhir mano|ramaiḥ:
evam ādibhir ākīrṇaḥ śriyaṃ puṣyaty ayaṃ giriḥ.

Now, during the long time that godlike Dasha·rathi had been living on the mountain, he had grown to love the mountains and the forest. Once, eager to please Vaidéhi and beguile his own mind, he showed his wife around wonderful Chitra·kuta, as Indra, breaker of fortresses, might show Shachi. 88.1

"Neither my expulsion from the kingdom, my dear, nor being apart from my loved ones pains my heart when I am viewing this lovely mountain. Look at the mountain, my dear, home to flocks of many different birds, how its peaks almost scrape the sky and veins of minerals adorn it. What a brilliant sight the lordly mountain is with its different regions adorned with minerals. Some sparkle silvery; some look blood-red or are tinted yellow or madder-crimson; some gleam like the rarest gems; some shine like topaz or crystal or the pale white screw-pine flower, or gleam like stars or quicksilver. What a sight the mountain makes, swarming with birds and teeming with herds of beasts, panthers, hyenas and monkeys, all of them tame. 88.5

The trees that cover the mountain heighten its majesty, flowering, fruitful trees, shady and enchanting: mangoes, rose-apples, *ásanas*, *lodhras*, *priyálas*, jackfruit trees and *dhavas*, *ankólas*, the gnarled *tínishas*, *bilva* trees, ebonies, bamboo, white Kashmiri teaks, soapnut trees, quince and butter trees, evergreens, jujubes and myrobalan trees, *nipas*, cane, *dhánvanas* and pomegranates. 88.10

Śaila|prastheṣu ramyeṣu paśy' êmān kāma|harṣaṇān
kinnarān dvaṃdvaśo bhadre ramamāṇān manasvinaḥ.
Śākh"|âvasaktān khaḍgāṃś ca pravarāṇy ambarāṇi ca
paśya: vidyā|dhara|strīṇāṃ krīḍed deśān mano|ramān.
Jala|prapātair udbhedair niṣyandaiś ca kva cit kva cit
sravadbhir bhāty ayaṃ śailaḥ sravan mada iva dvipaḥ.
Guhā|samīraṇo gandhān nānā|puṣpa|bhavān vahan
ghrāṇa|tarpaṇam abhyetya kaṃ naraṃ na praharṣayet?
88.15 Yadīha śarado 'nekās tvayā sārdham a|nindite
Lakṣmaṇena ca vatsyāmi na māṃ śokaḥ pradhakṣyati.
Bahu|puṣpaphale ramye nānā|dvija|gaṇ'|āyute
vicitra|śikhare hy asmin ratavān asmi bhāmini.
Anena vana|vāsena mayā prāptaṃ phala|dvayam
pituś c' ânṛṇatā dharme Bharatasya priyaṃ tathā.

Vaidehi ramase kaccic Citrakūṭe mayā saha
paśyantī vividhān bhāvān mano|vāk|kāya|saṃyatān?
Idam ev' âmṛtaṃ prāhū rājñāṃ rāja|ṛṣayaḥ pare
vana|vāsaṃ bhav'|ârthāya pretya me prapitāmahāḥ.
88.20 Śilāḥ śailasya śobhante viśālāḥ śataśo 'bhitaḥ
bahulā bahulair varṇair nīla|pīta|sit'|âruṇaiḥ
Niśi bhānty acal'|êndrasya hut'|âśana|śikhā iva
oṣadhyaḥ sva|prabhā|lakṣmyā bhrājamānāḥ sahasraśaḥ

Look, my dear, there on the lovely hillsides are some spirited *kínnaras*, impassioned with desire and pairing off to make love. And look there, where those swords and delicate garments are hanging from the branches: those are the enchanting pleasure bowers of the *vidya·dhara* women. What a sight the mountain makes with its waterfalls, one here, one there, and with its springs and running streams—it is like an elephant running with ichor. The breeze out of the grottoes bears the fragrance of different flowers and approaches with such pleasing redolence—what man would it not gladden? If I might live here all the years to come 88.15
with you, my flawless wife, and with Lákshmana, I would never feel the searing pain of grief. For I delight in this lovely mountain, my beautiful wife, with its magnificent peaks where fruit and flowers are so abundant and many different birds come flocking. And my living in the forest has brought me a twofold reward; my father has discharged his debt to righteousness, and Bhárata has been pleased as well.

Vaidéhi, you take delight, don't you, in being with me on Chitra·kuta, with so many different marvels before your eyes to experience, to contemplate and talk about? Living in the forest—as the royal seers of old, my ancestors, used to say—is the real drink of immortality for kings, and leads to well-being after death.

How beautiful the rocks of the mountain are, massive 88.20
rocks, hundreds of them all around, so many and so colorful —blue-black, yellow, white and pink. At night the plants growing on the lordly mountain seem like tongues of fire, blazing by the thousand in the beauty of their own luster.

Ke cit kṣaya|nibhā deśāḥ ke cid udyāna|saṃnibhāḥ
ke cid eka|śilā bhānti parvatasy' âsya bhāmini
Bhittv" êva vasudhāṃ bhāti Citrakūṭaḥ samutthitaḥ
Citrakūṭasya kūṭo 'sau dṛśyate sarvataḥ śivaḥ
Kuṣṭha|puṃnāga|tagara|bhūrja|patr'|ôttara|cchadān
kāmināṃ svāstarān paśya kuśe|śaya|dal'|āyutān
88.25 Mṛditāś c' âpaviddhāś ca dṛśyante kamala|srajaḥ
kāmibhir vanite paśya phalāni vividhāni ca
Vasvaukasārāṃ Nalinīm atyetīv' ôttarān kurūn
parvataś Citrakūṭo 'sau bahu|mūla|phal'|ôdakaḥ.
Imaṃ tu kālaṃ vanite vijahrivāṃs
tvayā ca Sīte saha Lakṣmaṇena ca
ratiṃ prapatsye kula|dharma|vardhinīṃ
satāṃ pathi svair niyamaiḥ paraiḥ sthitaḥ.»

89.1 Atha śailād viniṣkramya Maithilīṃ Kosal'|ēśvaraḥ
adarśayac chubha|jalāṃ ramyāṃ Mandākinīṃ nadīm.
Abravīc ca varārohāṃ cāru|candra|nibh'|ānanām
Videha|rājasya sutāṃ Rāmo rājīva|locanaḥ.
Vicitra|pulināṃ ramyāṃ haṃsa|sārasa|sevitām
kusumair upasaṃpannāṃ paśya Mandākinīṃ nadīm.
Nānā|vidhais tīra|ruhair vṛtāṃ puṣpa|phala|drumaiḥ
rājantīṃ rāja|rājasya Nalinīm iva sarvataḥ.
89.5 Mṛga|yūtha|nipītāni kaluṣ'|âmbhāṃsi sāmpratam
tīrthāni ramaṇīyāni ratiṃ saṃjanayanti me.
Jaṭ"|âjina|dharāḥ kāle valkal'|ôttara|vāsasaḥ

Some parts of the mountain, my lovely, look like dwelling places or gardens, while others are sheer rock. It is as if Chitra·kuta had arisen, splitting open the earth, but over there its peak seems gracious in every way. There you can see the sumptuous beds of lovers, spread with leaves of the wild ginger tree, the laurel, waxflower and birch, and interspersed with lotus petals. Their lotus garlands can be seen, too, cast 88.25
aside now by the lovers and crushed. And there, my beloved, look at all those different fruits. So rich in fruit and roots and water is Mount Chitra·kuta that it almost surpasses Vasv·aukasára, Nálini or the land of the northern Kurus.

Passing this time with you, my beloved Sita, and with Lákshmana, will be a pleasure to me, and one that fosters the righteousness of my House, for I shall be keeping to the path of the good with the utmost self-restraint."

Then the lord of Kósala, making his way down the 89.1
mountain, showed Máithili where the clear waters of the lovely Mandákini River ran. Lotus-eyed Rama spoke to the daughter of the king of Vidéha, his broad-hipped wife with a face as fair as the moon. "Just look at the lovely Mandákini River with its sparkling sandbanks, the geese and cranes that make their home there, the flowers embellishing it, the fruiting and blossoming trees of every sort that grow thick upon its banks. Wherever one looks it shimmers like Nálini, the lake of Kubéra, king of kings. Herds of animals have 89.5
drunk here, and though the landing places are turbid now, they are lovely still and give me much pleasure. Over there seers wearing hides, matted hair and upper garments of bark cloth are immersing themselves in the Mandákini River, my

ṛṣayas tv avagāhante nadīṃ Mandākinīṃ priye.
Ādityam upatiṣṭhante niyamād ūrdhva|bāhavaḥ
ete 'pare viśāl'|âkṣi munayaḥ saṃśita|vratāḥ.
Mārut'|ôddhūta|śikharaiḥ pranṛtta iva parvataḥ
pādapaiḥ patra|puṣpāṇi sṛjadbhir abhito nadīm.

Kaccin maṇi|nikāś'|ôdāṃ kaccit pulina|śālinīm
kaccit siddha|jan'|ākīrṇāṃ paśya Mandākinīṃ nadīm.
89.10 Nirdhūtān vāyunā paśya vitatān puṣpa|saṃcayān
poplūyamānān aparān paśya tvaṃ jala|madhyagān.
Tāṃś c' âtivalgu|vacaso rath'|âṅg'|āhvayanā dvijāḥ
adhirohanti kalyāṇi niṣkūjantaḥ śubhā giraḥ.
Darśanaṃ Citrakūṭasya Mandākinyāś ca śobhane
adhikaṃ pura|vāsāc ca manye ca tava darśanāt.

Vidhūta|kaluṣaiḥ siddhais tapo|dama|śamānvitaiḥ
nitya|vikṣobhita jalāṃ vihāhasva mayā saha.
Sakhīvac ca vigāhasva Sīte mandakinīm imām
kamalāny avamajjantī puṣkarāṇi ca bhāmini.
89.15 Tvaṃ paura|janavad vyālān Ayodhyām iva parvatam
manyasva vanite nityaṃ Sarayūvad imāṃ nadīm.
Lakṣmaṇaś c' âiva dharm'|ātmā man|nideśe vyavasthitaḥ
tvaṃ c' ânukūlā Vaidehi prītiṃ janayatho mama.
Upaspṛśaṃs tri|ṣavaṇaṃ madhu|mūla|phal'|âśanaḥ
n' Âyodhyāyai na rājyāya spṛhaye 'dya tvayā saha.
Imāṃ hi paśyan gaja|yūtha|lolitāṃ
nipīta|toyāṃ gaja|siṃha|vānaraiḥ

beloved, for it is the appointed hour. Those others are sages who take rigorous vows and worship the sun, my large-eyed wife, with their arms held high in self-mortification. As the wind buffets the treetops, and they strew their leaves and flowers all about the river, the mountain seems almost ready to dance.

Look at the Mandákini River there, where its water flows crystal-clear, and there, where its sandy beaches stretch out, and over there, where perfected beings crowd about it. Look 89.10
at the flowers the wind has shaken off and massed into drifts, or those others bobbing in the middle of the water. Those sweet-voiced birds are sheldrakes, my precious, the ones alighting on the drifts of flowers and uttering their pleasant cries. To set one's eyes on Chitra·kuta and the Mandákini, my lovely, is far better than living in the town—in your eyes, too, I think.

Come plunge with me into the river. Its waters, as always, are agitated only by perfected beings, men cleansed of all impurities and endowed with ascetic power, self-restraint and tranquility. Plunge into the Mandákini, my lovely Sita, as if it were an old friend of yours, submerging the lotuses and water lilies. Just think of the wild animals as the townsmen 89.15
all the while, my beloved, of the mountain as Ayódhya, and this river as the Sárayu. You both bring me such joy, both righteous Lákshmana, who attends to my orders, and you, Vaidéhi, who are so agreeable. Being here with you, bathing at the time of the three oblations, and eating sweet fruit and roots, I no longer yearn either for Ayódhya or the kingship. The man does not exist who would not find repose and happiness beholding this river, the herds of elephants that

supuṣpitaiḥ puṣpa|dharair alaṃkṛtāṃ
na so 'sti yaḥ syān na gata|kramaḥ sukhī.»
It' îva Rāmo bahu|saṃgataṃ vacaḥ
priyā|sahāyaḥ saritaṃ prati bruvan
cacāra ramyaṃ nayan'|âñjana|prabhaṃ
sa Citrakūṭaṃ raghu|vaṃśa|vardhanaḥ.

90.1 Tathā tatr' āsatas tasya Bharatasy' ôpayāyinaḥ
sainya reṇuś ca śabdaś ca prādurāstāṃ nabhaḥ|spṛśau.
Etasminn antare trastāḥ śabdena mahatā tataḥ
arditā yūthapā mattāḥ sa|yūthā dudruvur diśaḥ.
Sa taṃ sainya|samudbhūtaṃ śabdaṃ śuśrava Rāghavaḥ
tāṃś ca vipradrutān sarvān yūthapān anvavaikṣata.
Tāṃś ca vidravato dṛṣṭvā taṃ ca śrutvā sa niḥsvanam
uvāca Rāmaḥ Saumitriṃ Lakṣmaṇaṃ dīpta|tejasam:
90.5 «Hanta Lakṣmaṇa paśy' êha Sumitrā suprajās tvayā
bhīma|stanita|gambhīras tumulaḥ śrūyate svanaḥ.
Rājā vā rāja|mātro vā mṛgayām aṭate vane
anyad vā śvāpadaṃ kiṃ cit Saumitre jñātum arhasi
sarvam etad yathā|tattvam acirāj jñātum arhasi.»
Sa Lakṣmaṇaḥ saṃtvaritaḥ sālam āruhya puṣpitam
prekṣamāṇo diśaḥ sarvāḥ pūrvāṃ diśam avaikṣata.
Udaṅ|mukhaḥ prekṣamāṇo dadarśa mahatīṃ camūm
rath'|âśva|gaja|saṃbādhāṃ yattair yuktāṃ padātibhiḥ.
Tām aśva|gaja|saṃpūrṇāṃ ratha|dhvaja|vibhūṣitām
śaśaṃsa senāṃ Rāmāya vacanaṃ c' êdam abravīt:
90.10 «Agniṃ saṃśamayatv āryaḥ Sītā ca bhajatāṃ guhām

stir it up, the lions, monkeys and elephants that come to drink its water, and the blossoming trees in full bloom that lend it such adornment."

So Rama, heir of the Raghu dynasty, spoke with his beloved about the river, fondly and at length, as he went strolling over lovely Chitra·kuta, a very balm to the eye.

Now, as Rama was sitting there, he perceived the noise 90.1
and the dust—they reached to heaven—of Bhárata's approaching army. The wild bull elephants, meanwhile, were frightened by the deafening noise, and in panic they and their herds ran scattering in every direction. Rághava heard the noise made by the army and noticed all the elephants running away. And watching them run off, and listening to the din, Rama addressed Lákshmana Saumítri, a man of blazing power: "Ho there, Lákshmana, worthy son of Su- 90.5
mítra, go and take a look. A tumultuous clamor has broken out, awesome and deep as thunder. Perhaps a king or royal officer is out hunting in the forest, or it could be something else, an animal maybe. Please find out, Saumítri, find out as quickly as you can exactly what this all might be."

Lákshmana hurriedly climbed a flowering *sala* tree, and, peering about in every direction, he turned to the east. Craning his neck and peering out, he saw a vast army, a mass of chariots, horses and elephants, and foot soldiers among them on the alert. He informed Rama of the army teeming with horses and elephants, decked out with chariot-standards, and then added: "Put out the fire, brother, and let 90.10
Sita get to a cave. String your bow and take up your arrows

sa|jyaṃ kuruṣva cāpaṃ ca śarāṃś ca kavacaṃ tathā!»
Taṃ Rāmaḥ puruṣa|vyāghro Lakṣmaṇaṃ pratyuvāca ha:
«aṅg'|âvekṣasva Saumitre kasy' âitāṃ manyase camūm?»

Evam uktas tu Rāmeṇa lakṣmāṇo vākyam abravīt
didhakṣann iva tāṃ senāṃ ruṣitaḥ pāvako yathā:
«Saṃpannaṃ rājyam icchaṃs tu
vyaktaṃ prāpy' âbhiṣecanam
āvāṃ hantuṃ samabhyeti
Kaikeyyā Bharataḥ sutaḥ!
Eṣa vai sumahāñ śrīmān viṭapī saṃprakāśate:
virājaty udgata|skandhaḥ kovidāra|dhvajo rathe.
90.15 Bhajanty ete yathā|kāmam aśvān āruhya śīghragān
ete bhrājanti saṃhṛṣṭā jagān āruhya sādinaḥ.
Gṛhīta|dhanuṣau c' āvāṃ giriṃ vīra śrayāvahe
api nau vaśam āgacchet kovidāra|dhvajo raṇe!
Api drakṣyāmi Bharataṃ yat|kṛte vyasanaṃ mahat
tvayā Rāghava saṃprāptaṃ Sītayā ca mayā tathā.
Yan|nimittaṃ bhavān rājyāc cyuto Rāghava śāśvatīm
saṃprāpto 'yam arir vīra Bharato vadhya eva me.

Bharatasya vadhe doṣaṃ n' âhaṃ paśyāmi Rāghava
pūrv'|âpakariṇāṃ tyāge na hy adharmo vidhīyate.
etasmin nihate kṛtsnām anuśādhi vasuṃ|dharām.
90.20 Adya putraṃ hataṃ saṃkhye Kaikeyī rājya|kāmukā
mayā paśyet suduḥkh'|ārtā hasti|bhagnam iva drumam.
Kaikeyīṃ ca vadhiṣyāmi s'|ânubandhāṃ sa|bāndhavām.
kaluṣeṇ' âdya mahatā medinī parimucyatām!
Ady' êmaṃ saṃyataṃ krodham a|sat|kāraṃ ca mānada

and armor!" Rama, tiger among men, replied to Lákshmana, "Very well, but consider first, Saumítri: to whom do you think this army might belong?"

Like a raging fire ready to burn the army to ashes, Lákshmana replied to Rama: "Clearly now that he has got the consecration he wants to have the kingship wholly in his power and is coming to kill the two of us—who else but Bhárata, the son of Kaikéyi! There, in fact, the lofty majestic tree is coming into view: the standard of the spreading *kovidára* shining brilliantly atop his chariot. There are men mounted 90.15
on speeding horses drawing close at will, and how excited those riders appear mounted on the elephants. Let us take our bows and fall back to the mountain, my mighty brother, or make our stand right here, armed for battle with our weapons at the ready. If only the *kovidára* standard would come within our range in battle! If only I could catch sight of Bhárata, the cause of the great calamity that has befallen you, Rághava, Sita and me. Your enemy has arrived, mighty Rághava, he who brought about your expulsion from the ancient kingship. It is Bhárata, and I will kill him.

I see no wrong, Rághava, in slaying Bhárata. No unrighteousness comes from ridding oneself of a man who was first to give offense. When he has been struck down you shall rule the whole treasure-laden earth. If only that 90.20
power-hungry woman Kaikéyi could see her son killed by me today in combat—like a tree felled by an elephant—and feel the anguish of bitter sorrow. But no, I will slay Kaikéyi, too, and her supporters and kinsmen. Let the earth be cleansed today of this foul scum! Today, O giver of honor, I will cast out upon the enemy army my pent-up wrath and

mokṣyāmi śatru|sainyeṣu kakṣeṣv iva hut'|âśanam.
Ady' âitac Citrakūṭasya kānanaṃ niśitaiḥ śaraiḥ
bhindañ śatru|śarīrāṇi kariṣye śoṇit'|ôkṣitam.
Śarair nirbhinna|hṛdayān kuñjarāṃs turagāṃs tathā
śvāpadāḥ parikarṣantu narāś ca nihatān mayā.
Śarāṇāṃ dhanuṣaś c' âham an|ṛṇo 'smi mahā|have
sa|sainyaṃ Bharataṃ hatvā bhaviṣyāmi na saṃśayaḥ.»

Susaṃrabdhaṃ tu Saumitriṃ
Lakṣmaṇaṃ krodha|mūrchitam
Rāmas tu parisāntvy' âtha
vacanaṃ c' êdam abravīt:
«Kim atra dhanuṣā kāryam asinā vā sa|carmaṇā
maheṣvāse mahā|prājñe Bharate svayam āgate?
Prāpta|kālaṃ yad eṣo 'smān Bharato draṣṭum icchati
asmāsu manas" âpy eṣa n' âhitaṃ kiṃ cid ācaret.
Vipriyaṃ kṛta|pūrvaṃ te Bharatena kadā na kim
īdṛśaṃ vā bhayaṃ te 'dya Bharataṃ yo 'tra śaṅkase?
Na hi te niṣṭhuraṃ vācyo Bharato n' âpriyaṃ vacaḥ
ahaṃ hy apriyam uktaḥ syāṃ Bharatasy' âpriye kṛte.
Kathaṃ nu putrāḥ pitaraṃ hanyuḥ kasyāṃ cid āpadi
bhrātā vā bhrātaraṃ hanyāt Saumitre prāṇam ātmanaḥ?
Yadi rājyasya hetos tvam imāṃ vācaṃ prabhāṣase
vakṣyāmi Bharataṃ dṛṣṭvā ‹rājyam asmai pradīyatām.›
Ucyamāno hi Bharato mayā Lakṣmaṇa tattvataḥ
‹rājyam asmai prayacch' êti› ‹bāḍham ity› eva vakṣyati.»

our dishonor, like fire upon dry grass. Today I will rend the enemies' bodies with my sharp arrows, and spatter the woodlands of Chitra·kuta with their blood. And when my arrows have rent the hearts of their elephants and horses, let wild beasts drag them off, and the men, too, when I have cut them down. I have always discharged my debt to my 90.25
bow and arrows in great battles, and I have no doubt I shall again in destroying Bhárata and all his army."

In an effort to calm Lákshmana Saumítri, who was 91.1
so violently agitated and almost beside himself with rage, Rama spoke these words: "What need is there of a bow or sword and shield when it is the great archer, wise Bhárata himself, who is coming? It is only to be expected that Bhárata should wish to see us. He would not do us any harm, nor even contemplate it. When has Bhárata ever opposed you, or made you any such threat that you should now have these suspicions of him? You must not speak disparagingly 91.5
or abusively of Bhárata. It is I who would be abused were any abuse directed against him. How, after all, could a son kill his father, whatever the extremity, or a brother his brother, Saumítri, his very own breath of life? If it is for the sake of the kingship that you are saying these things, I shall tell Bhárata when I see him, 'Hand over the kingship to him.' For were I plainly to tell him, Lákshmana, 'Offer him the kingship,' Bhárata's only response would be, 'Of course.'"

Tath" ôkto dharma|śīlena bhrātrā tasya hite rataḥ
Lakṣmaṇaḥ praviveś' êva svāni gātrāṇi lajjayā.
Vrīḍitaṃ Lakṣmaṇaṃ dṛṣṭvā Rāghavaḥ pratyuvāca ha:
«eṣa manye mahā|bāhur ih' âsmān draṣṭum āgataḥ.
Vana|vāsam anudhyāya gṛhāya pratineṣyati
imāṃ v" âpy eśa Vaidehīm atyanta|sukha|sevinīm.
Etau tau saṃprakāśete gotravantau mano|ramau
vāyu|vega|samau vīra javanau turag'|ôttamau.
Sa eṣa sumahākāyaḥ kampate vāhinī|mukhe
nāgaḥ Śatruṃjayo nāma vṛddhas tātasya dhīmataḥ.»

Avatīrya tu sāl'|âgrāt tasmāt sa samitiṃ|jayaḥ
Lakṣmaṇaḥ prāñjalir bhūtvā tasthau Rāmasya pārśvataḥ
Bharaten' âtha saṃdiṣṭā saṃmardo na bhaved iti
samantāt tasya śailasya senā|vāsam akalpayat
Adhyardham Ikṣvāku|camūr yojanaṃ parvatasya sā
pārśve nyaviśad āvṛtya gaja|vāji|rath'|ākulā
Sā Citrakūṭe Bharatena senā
dharmaṃ puraskṛtya vidhūya darpam
prasādan'|ârthaṃ Raghu|nandanasya
virocate nītimatā praṇītā.

Niveśya senāṃ tu vibhuḥ padbhyāṃ pādavatāṃ varaḥ
abhigantuṃ sa Kākutstham iyeṣa guru|vartakam.
Niviṣṭa|mātre sainye tu yath"|ôddeśaṃ vinītavat
Bharato bhrātaraṃ vākyaṃ Śatrughnam idam abravīt:

So spoke his righteous brother, whose welfare was his one concern, and Lákshmana seemed almost to shrink into himself for shame. Rághava noticed Lákshmana's chagrin 91.10
and once again addressed him: "I think the great-armed prince has come here only to visit us. Or perhaps he wants to take Vaidéhi home. He may have had second thoughts about her staying in the forest, a woman used to every comfort. There you can see the team of splendid horses, my mighty brother, those thoroughbred, magnificent swift horses, in speed like the rushing wind. And there is Shatruñ·jaya, our wise father's aged and massive elephant, lumbering at the head of the army."

Climbing down from the top of the *sala* tree, Lákshmana, champion in battle, came and stood at Rama's side, hands cupped in reverence. On orders from Bhárata that there be 91.15
no disturbance, the army had pitched camp all around the mountain. For a league and a half along the slope of the mountain the Ikshváku army encamped with its throngs of elephants, horses and chariots. The army made a brilliant sight when Bhárata had marshalled it there on Chitra·kuta the day he came, shedding his pride and honoring the claims of righteousness, to conciliate the delight of the Raghus with all the diplomacy at his command.

After encamping the army, lordly Bhárata, the best 92.1
of men who walk the earth, set out walking to find Kakútstha, who was a *guru* to him. As soon as the army was duly encamped as he had instructed, Bhárata addressed his brother Shatrúghna:

«Kṣipraṃ vanam idaṃ saumya
nara|saṃghaiḥ samantataḥ
lubdhaiś ca sahitair ebhis
tvam anveṣitum arhasi.
Yāvan na Rāmaṃ drakṣyāmi Lakṣmaṇaṃ vā mahā|balam
Vaidehīṃ vā mahā|bhāgāṃ na me śāntir bhaviṣyati.
92.5 Yāvan na candra|saṃkāśaṃ drakṣyāmi śubham ānanam
bhrātuḥ padma|palāś'|âkṣaṃ na me śāntir bhaviṣyati.
Yāvan na caraṇau bhrātuḥ pārthiva|vyañjan'|ânvitau
śirasā dhārayiṣyāmi na me śāntir bhaviṣyati.
Yāvan na rājye rājy'|ârhaḥ pitṛ|paitāmahe sthitaḥ
abhiṣeka|jala|klinno na me śāntir bhaviṣyati.
Kṛta|kṛtyā mahā|bhāgā Vaidehī Janak'|ātmajā
bhartāraṃ sāgar'|ântāyāḥ pṛthivyā y" ânugacchati.
Subhagaś Citrakūṭo 'sau giri|rāj'|ôpamo giriḥ
yasmin vasati Kākutsthaḥ kubera iva Nandane.
92.10 Kṛta|kāryam idaṃ durgaṃ vanaṃ vyāla|niṣevitam
yad adhyāste mahā|tejā Rāmaḥ śastrabhṛtāṃ varaḥ.»
Evam uktvā mahā|tejā Bharataḥ puruṣa|ṛṣabhaḥ
padbhyām eva mahā|tejāḥ praviveśa mahad vanam
Sa tāni druma|jālāni jātāni giri|sānuṣu
puṣpit'|âgrāṇi madhyena jagāma vadatāṃ varaḥ
Sa gireś Citrakūṭasya sālam āsādya puṣpitam
Rām'|āśrama|gatasy' âgner dadarśa dhvajam ucchritam
Taṃ dṛṣṭvā Bharataḥ śrīmān mumoda saha|bāndhavaḥ
atra Rāma iti jñātvā gataḥ pāram iv' âmbhasaḥ
92.15 Sa Citrakūṭe tu girau niśāmya
Rām'|āśramaṃ puṇya|jan'|ôpapannam
Guhena sārdhaṃ tvarito jagāma
punar niveśy' âiva camūṃ mah"|ātmā.

"Dear brother, you must at once explore the whole extent of the forest, with troops of our men and these hunters to accompany you. I shall find no peace until I see Rama, powerful Lákshmana and illustrious Vaidéhi. I shall find no peace until I see the lovely moonlike face of my brother and his lotus-petal eyes. I shall find no peace until I bow my head to my brother's feet, which bear all the signs of sovereignty. I shall find no peace until he assumes, as he deserves, his position in the kingship of our fathers and forefathers, with the consecration water moist upon his head. Illustrious Vaidéhi, the daughter of Jánaka, has fulfilled herself by following her husband, master of the ocean-girdled earth. How fortunate is Chitra·kuta, that mountain equal to Himálaya, king of mountains, where Rama is living like Kubéra in Nándana. This trackless forest, the haunt of wild beasts, has fulfilled itself as well, to have become the dwelling place of Rama, the best of all who bear arms."

With this, mighty Bhárata, bull among men, set out on foot into the great forest. The eloquent prince made his way through the thickets growing on the mountain slopes, their treetops all in bloom. Upon reaching the flowering *sala* tree atop Mount Chitra·kuta, he spied the towering banner of the fire burning in Rama's ashram. Majestic Bhárata and his kinsmen rejoiced to see it, knowing that Rama must be there; the prince felt as if at last he had made the farther shore of an ocean. Perceiving upon Mount Chitra·kuta Rama's ashram and the holy men there, great Bhárata hurried off with Guha after again encamping the army.

93.1 Niviṣṭāyāṃ tu senāyām utsuko Bharatas tadā
jagāma bhrātaraṃ draṣṭuṃ Śatrughnam anudarśayan
Ṛṣiṃ Vasiṣṭhaṃ saṃdiśya mātṝr me śīghram ānaya
iti tvaritam agre sa jāgama guru|vatsalaḥ
Sumantras tv api Śatrughnam a|dūrād anvapadyata
Rām'|âdarśanajas tarṣo Bharatasy' êva tasya ca
Gacchann ev' âtha Bharatas tāpas'|ālaya|saṃsthitām
bhrātuḥ parṇa|kuṭīṃ śrīmān uṭajaṃ ca dadarśa ha
93.5 Śālāyās tv agratas tasyā dadarśa Bharatas tadā
kāṣṭāni c' âvabhagnāni puṣpāṇy avacitāni ca
Dadarśa ca vane tasmin mahataḥ saṃcayān kṛtān
mṛgāṇāṃ mahiṣāṇāṃ ca karīṣaiḥ śīta|kāraṇāt
Gacchan eva mahā|bāhur dyutimān Bharatas tadā
Śatrughnaṃ c' âbravīd dhṛṣṭas tān amātyāṃś ca sarvaśaḥ:
«Manye prāptāḥ sma taṃ deśaṃ Bharadvājo yam abravīt
n' âtidūre hi manye 'haṃ nadīṃ Mandākinīm itaḥ.
Uccair baddhāni cīrāṇi Lakṣmaṇena bhaved ayam
abhijñāna|kṛtaḥ panthā vikāle gantum icchatā.
93.10 Idaṃ c' ôdātta|dantānāṃ kuñjarāṇāṃ tarasvinām
śaila|pārśve parikrāntam anyonyam abhigarjatām.
Yam ev' ādhātum icchanti tāpasāḥ satataṃ vane
tasy' āsau dṛśyate dhūmaḥ saṃkulaḥ kṛṣṭa|vartmanaḥ.
Atr' âhaṃ puruṣa|vyāghraṃ guru|sat|kāra|kāriṇam
āryaṃ drakṣyāmi saṃhṛṣṭo maha|ṛṣim iva Rāghavam.»
Atha gatvā muhūrtaṃ tu Citrakūṭaṃ sa Rāghavaḥ
Mandākinīm anuprāptas taṃ janaṃ c' êdam abravīt:

Now, once the army was encamped, Bhárata set out 93.1
impatient to see his brother, showing the way for Shatrúghna. He had instructed the seer Vasíshtha to bring his mothers directly, while he himself hurried on ahead, out of deep love for his *guru*. Sumántra likewise followed close behind Shatrúghna, for he was no less ardent than Bhárata to see Rama again. Majestic Bhárata advanced and soon could see his brother's leaf-hut and thatched cottage situated within an ascetic's retreat. In front of the lodge Bhárata saw 93.5
the logs that had been cut and the flowers that had been gathered. And in the forest he saw the dry dung of buffalo and other animals collected in great mounds for use against the cold.

As brilliant, great-armed Bhárata proceeded he excitedly spoke to Shatrúghna and the ministers all around him: "I think we must have reached the spot Bharad·vaja spoke of; the Mandákini River cannot be far from here, I think. This must be the trail, for above strips of bark have been fastened. Lákshmana must have marked it for travelling at night. And that one must only be a path beaten on the 93.10
mountain slope by the large-tusked elephants charging and trumpeting at one another. There you can see the thick smoke from black-trailed fire; it is customary for ascetics to maintain a fire continuously in the forest. It is here I shall have the delight of seeing my noble brother Rághava, who is living like a great seer to do his *guru* honor."

Bhárata Rághava continued on and soon reached the place where Chitra·kuta abuts the Mandákini. He addressed the people with him:

«Jagatyāṃ puruṣa|vyāghra āste ‹vīr'|āsane› rataḥ
jan'|êndro nirjanaṃ prāpya dhiṅ me janma sa|jīvitam!
93.15 Mat|kṛte vyasanaṃ prāpto loka|nātho mahā|dyutiḥ
sarān kāmān parityajya vane vasati Rāghavaḥ.
Iti loka|samākruṣṭaḥ pādeṣv adya prasādayan
Rāmasya nipatiṣyāmi Sītāyāś ca punaḥ punaḥ.»

Evaṃ sa vilapaṃs tasmin vane Daśarath'|ātmajaḥ
dadarśa mahatīṃ puṇyāṃ parṇa|śālāṃ mano|ramām
Śāla|tāl'|âśva|karṇānāṃ parṇair bahubhir āvṛtām
viśālāṃ mṛdubhis tīrṇāṃ kuśair vedim iv' âdhvare
Śakr'|āyudha|nikāśaiś ca kārmukair bhāra|sādhanaiḥ
rukma|pṛṣṭhair mahā|sāraiḥ śobhitāṃ śatru|bādhakaiḥ
93.20 Arka|raśmi|pratīkāśair ghorais tūṇī|gataiḥ śaraiḥ
śobhitāṃ dīpta|vadanaiḥ sarpair Bhogavatīm iva
Mahā|rajata|vāsobhyām asibhyāṃ ca virājitām
rukma|bindu|vicitrābhyāṃ carmabhyāṃ c' âpi śobhitām
Godh"|âṅgulitrair āsaktaiś citraiḥ kāñcana|bhūṣitaiḥ
ari|saṃghair an|ādhṛṣyāṃ mṛgaiḥ siṃha|guhām iva
Prāg|udak|pravaṇāṃ vediṃ viśālāṃ dīpta|pāvakām
dadarśa Bharatas tatra puṇyāṃ Rāma|niveśane
Nirīkṣya sa muhūrtaṃ tu dadarśa Bharato gurum
uṭaje Rāmam āsīnāṃ jaṭā|maṇḍala|dhāriṇam

"The tiger among men must sit on the ground and practice the 'heroic' posture in yoga—the lord of all people in this unpeopled place. A curse on me that I was born and that I live! Because of me a calamity has befallen brilliant 93.15
Rághava, the master of the world. He has had to renounce all pleasures and make his dwelling in the forest. And the world condemns me for this. But now I will go and beg their forgiveness; I will throw myself down again and again at the feet of Rama and Sita."

As the son of Dasha·ratha was lamenting in this fashion, he saw a large, enchanting and holy leaf-hut in the forest, densely thatched with *sala* tree, palmyra and *ashva·karna* leaves. It was a spacious hut with soft *kusha* grass spread about, like an altar at a sacred rite. Bows adorned it, gleaming like rainbows, heavy, sturdy and backed with gold, of a sort that could rout any foe. Arrows flashing like sunbeams 93.20
adorned it, too, like the serpents adorning Bhógavati, awesome arrows packed in quivers, with heads blazing. A pair of swords in golden scabbards shed a luster over the hut, and two shields lent their adornment, brilliantly embossed with gold. Brilliant forearm-guards and finger-guards studded with gold were hanging there, too. It was a place as impregnable to enemy hordes as a lion's cave to deer. Bhárata saw a holy altar there in Rama's residence, broad and sloping to the northeast, with a blazing fire upon it. Glancing about, Bhárata suddenly saw his *guru* Rama seated in the thatched cottage, wearing a crown of matted hair.

93.25 Taṃ tu kṛṣṇ'|âjina|dharaṃ cīra|valkala|vāsasam
dadarśa Rāmam āsīnam abhitaḥ pāvak'|ôpamam.
Siṃha|skandhaṃ mahā|bāhuṃ puṇḍarīka|nibh'|ēkṣaṇam
pṛthivyāḥ sagar'|ântāyā bhartāraṃ dharma|cāriṇam.
Upaviṣṭaṃ mahā|bāhuṃ brahmāṇam iva śāśvatam
sthaṇḍile darbha|saṃstīrṇe Sītayā Lakṣmaṇena ca.
Taṃ dṛṣṭvā Bharataḥ śrīmān duḥkha|moha|pariplutaḥ
abhyadhāvata dharm'|ātmā Bharataḥ kaikayī|sutaḥ.
Dṛṣṭvā ca vilalāp' ārto bāṣpa|saṃdigdhayā girā
aśaknuvan dhārayituṃ dhairyād vacanam abravīt:
93.30 «Yaḥ saṃsadi prakṛtibhir bhaved yukta upāsitum
vanyair mṛgair upāsīnaḥ so 'yam āste mam' âgrajaḥ.
Vāsobhir bahu|sāhasrair yo mah"|ātmā pur" ôcitaḥ
mṛg'|âjine so 'yam iha pravaste dharmam ācaran.
Adhārayad yo vividhāś citrāḥ sumanasas tadā
so 'yaṃ jaṭā|bhāram imaṃ sahate Rāghavaḥ katham?
Yasya yajñair yath"|ādiṣṭair yukto dharmasya saṃcayaḥ
śarīra|kleśa|saṃbhūtaṃ sa dharmaṃ parimārgate.
Candanena mah"|ârheṇa yasy'|âṅgam upasevitam
malena tasy' âṅgam idaṃ katham āryasya sevyate?
93.35 Man|nimittam idaṃ duḥkhaṃ prāpto Rāmaḥ sukh'|ôcitaḥ
dhig jīvitaṃ nṛśaṃsasya mama loka|vigarhitam!»
Ity evaṃ vilapan dīnaḥ prasvinna|mukha|paṅkajaḥ
pādāv aprāpya Rāmasya papāta Bharato rudan.

He saw Rama seated there, dressed in a black antelope 93.25
hide and bark-cloth garment. He was the image of fire in every respect, with the shoulders of a lion, great arms and lotus-petal eyes—the righteous master of all the ocean-girdled earth. He looked like the eternal Brahma as he sat together with Sita and Lákshmana upon the floor strewn with *darbha* grass. When majestic Bhárata saw him, both sorrow and confusion overwhelmed him at once, and righteous Bhárata, the son of Kaikéyi, went running to him. The mere sight of Rama anguished him, and he broke out in sob-choked lamentation. He could hardly endure it, and yet he steadied himself to speak:

"The man to whom his subjects in the assembly should 93.30
rightly be paying homage, here he sits, my elder brother, receiving the homage of beasts of the wild. The man who in the past was accustomed to clothes worth many thousands, here he is, the great man, wearing deerskins in the performance of righteousness. How can Rághava bear this burden of matted hair, when he used to wear many-colored flowers of every variety? The man who should rightly be gaining abundant merit through sacrifices performed according to precept now seeks it by mortifying his body. It had always been precious sandalwood cream that coated my noble brother's limbs. How is it possible they are now coated with dirt? It is my fault this misery has befallen Rama, who 93.35
had known nothing but happiness. A curse on my life, vile creature that I am, an object of scorn to all the world!" So Bhárata lamented in desolation and, his lotus face breaking out in sweat, he reached in vain for Rama's feet and collapsed in tears.

Duḥkh'|âbhitapto Bharato rāja|putro mahā|balaḥ
uktv" «āry' êti» sakṛd dīnaṃ punar n' ôvāca kiṃ cana.
Bāṣp'|āpihita|kaṇṭhaś ca prekṣya Rāmaṃ yaśasvinam
«āry' êty» ev' âbhisaṃkruśya vyāhartuṃ n' âśakat tataḥ.
Śatrughnaś c' âpi Rāmasya vavande caraṇau rudan
tāv ubhau sa samāliṅgya Rāmo 'py aśrūṇy avartayat.
93.40 Tataḥ Sumantreṇa Guhena c' âiva
samīyatū rāja|sutāv araṇye
divākaraś c' âiva niśākaraś ca
yath" âmbare Śukra|Bṛhaspatibhyām.
Tān pārthivān vāraṇa|yūthap'|ābhān
samāgatāṃs tatra mahaty araṇye
van'|âukasas te 'pi samīkṣya sarve
'py aśrūṇy amuñcan pravihāya harṣam.

94.1 Āghrāya Rāmas taṃ mūrdhni pariṣvajya ca Rāghavaḥ
aṅke Bharatam āropya paryapṛcchat samāhitaḥ:
«Kva nu te 'bhūt pitā tāta yad araṇyaṃ tvam āgataḥ?
na hi tvaṃ jīvatas tasya vanam āgantum arhasi.
Cirasya bata paśyāmi dūrād Bharatam āgatam
duṣpratīkam araṇye 'smin kiṃ tāta vanam āgataḥ?
Kaccid Daśaratho rājā kuśalī satya|saṃgaraḥ
rājasūy'|âśvamedhānām āhartā dharma|niścayaḥ.
94.5 Sa kaccid brāhmaṇo vidvān dharma|nityo mahā|dyutiḥ
Ikṣvākūṇām upādhyāyo yathāvat tāta pūjyate.
Tāta kaccic ca Kausalyā Sumitrā ca prajāvatī
sukhinī kaccid āryā ca devī nandati Kaikayī.
Kaccid vinaya|saṃpannaḥ kula|putro bahu|śrutaḥ

Consumed with sorrow, the powerful prince Bhárata exclaimed in desolation, "My brother," but could say nothing further. He glanced at glorious Rama, and through a sob-choked throat he cried out only "My brother!," unable to utter anything more. Shatrúghna was weeping, too, as he prostrated himself at Rama's feet. And as Rama embraced the two of them, he shed tears as well. The two princes then 93.40
met with Sumántra and Guha there in the wilderness—it was as if the day-bringing sun and the night-bringing moon were to meet with the planets Shukra and Brihas·pati in the sky. The inhabitants of the forest watched as the princes, men like bull elephants, were reunited there in the great wilderness, and they lost all delight as well, and every one of them burst into tears.

RAMA DREW BHÁRATA to his breast, embraced him and 94.1
kissed him on the forehead. Then he questioned him closely:

"What has become of your father, dear brother, that you have come to the wilderness? While he yet lives you should not be going off to the forest. It is a long time, indeed, since I have seen Bhárata, who has come from so far into this wilderness. Why have you come to the forest, dear brother, looking so somber? King Dasha·ratha is in good health, I trust, still true to his given word, still performing royal consecrations and horse-sacrifices, and deciding points of law. I trust proper homage is still being shown the wise 94.5
and brilliant *brahman*, dear brother, the preceptor of the Ikshvákus, who is constant in righteousness. Dear brother, Kausálya is happy, I hope, and Sumítra, the mother of such good children. I trust noble Queen Kaikéyi rejoices, too. You

an|asūyur anudraṣṭā sat|kṛtas te purohitaḥ.

Kaccid agniṣu te yukto vidhijño matimān ṛjuḥ
hutaṃ ca hoṣyamāṇaṃ ca kāle vedayate sadā.
Iṣv|astra|vara|saṃpannam artha|śāstra|viśāradam
Sudhanvānam upādhyāyaṃ kaccit tvaṃ tāta manyase.
94.10 Kaccid ātma|samāḥ śūrāḥ śrutavanto jit'|êndriyāḥ
kulīnāś c' êṅgitajñāś ca kṛtās te tāta mantriṇaḥ.
Mantro vijaya|mūlaṃ hi rājñāṃ bhavati Rāghava
susaṃvṛto mantra|dharair amātyaiḥ śāstra|kovidaiḥ.
Kaccin nidrā|vaśaṃ n' âiṣi kaccit kāle vibudhyase
kac ciṃś c' âpara|rātriṣu cintayasy artha|naipuṇam.
Kaccin mantrayase n' âikaḥ kaccin na bahubhiḥ saha
kaccit te mantrito mantro rāṣṭraṃ na paridhāvati.

Kaccid arthaṃ viniścitya laghu|mūlaṃ mah"|ôdayam
kṣipram ārabhase kartuṃ na dīrghayasi Rāghava.
94.15 Kaccit tu sukṛtāny eva kṛta|rūpāṇi vā punaḥ
vidus te sarva|kāryāṇi na kartavyāni pārthivāḥ.
Kaccin na tarkair yuktvā vā ye c' âpy aparikīrtitāḥ
tvayā vā tava v" âmātyair budhyate tāta mantritam.
Kaccit sahasrān mūrkhāṇām ekam icchasi paṇḍitam
paṇḍito hy artha|kṛcchreṣu kuryān niḥśreyasaṃ mahat.

honor your family priest, I trust, a highborn man, learned and disciplined, who gives instruction ungrudgingly.

I hope you have appointed a man to tend your sacred fires who is sagacious and upright and knows the ritual precepts. I trust he always informs you in a timely fashion both before and after the oblations have been offered. I trust you continue to hold the preceptor Sudhanván in esteem, dear brother. He is expert in the most formidable arrows and missiles, and a master of the science of statecraft. You have 94.10
made brave men your counsellors, I trust, dear brother, men you look upon as your very self—men who are learned, self-controlled and highborn, and able to read a man's thoughts in his face. Counsel is the basis of a king's success, Rághava—when it is well kept by counsellors and ministers skilled in the science. You are not ruled by sleep, I trust, but are always awake early, while spending the late-night hours reflecting on what makes for prudent statecraft. I trust you take counsel neither all by yourself nor with a multitude. And, once determined, your counsel does not, I hope, fly about the kingdom.

I hope that the enterprises you decide on involve little expense and bring great profit, and that you undertake them quickly, without procrastinating. I trust kings learn of your 94.15
every venture only when fully accomplished, or nearly so, and not beforehand. Your counsels, dear brother, or your ministers', even when not betrayed, cannot be discovered, I hope, through reasoning or supposition. You prefer, I trust, a single wise man to a thousand fools. At times of political crisis a wise man can confer great benefits. A king may turn to thousands of fools, to tens of thousands, but they will not

Sahasrāṇy api mūrkhāṇāṃ yady upāste mahī|patiḥ
atha v" âpy ayutāny eva n' âsti teṣu sahāyatā.
Eko 'py amātyo medhāvī śūro dakṣo vicakṣaṇaḥ
rājānaṃ rāja|mātraṃ vā prāpayen mahatīṃ śriyam.
94.20 Kac|cin mukhyā mahatsv eva
madhyameṣu ca madhyamāḥ
jaghanyāś ca jaghanyeṣu
bhṛtyāḥ karmasu yojitāḥ.
Amātyān upadh"|âtītān pitṛ|paitāmahāñ śucīn
śreṣṭhāñ śreṣṭheṣu kaccit tvaṃ niyojayasi karmasu.
Kaccit tvāṃ n' âvajānanti yājakāḥ patitaṃ yathā
ugra|pratigrahītāraṃ kāmayānam iva striyaḥ.
Upāya|kuśalaṃ vaidyaṃ bhṛtyaṃ saṃdūṣaṇe ratam
śūram aiśvarya|kāmaṃ ca yo na hanti sa vadhyate.
Kaccid dhṛṣṭaś ca śūraś ca dhṛtimān matimāñ śuciḥ
kulīnaś c' ânuraktaś ca dakṣaḥ senā|patiḥ kṛtaḥ.
94.25 Balavantaś ca kaccit te mukhyā yuddha|viśāradāḥ
dṛṣṭ'|āpadānā vikrāntās tvayā sat|kṛtya mānitāḥ.
Kaccid balasya bhaktaṃ ca vetanaṃ ca yath"|ôcitam
saṃprāpta|kālaṃ dātavyaṃ dadāsi na vilambase.
Kāl'|âtikramaṇe hy eva bhakta|vetanayor bhṛtāḥ
bhartuḥ kupyanti duṣyanti so 'narthaḥ sumahān smṛtaḥ.
Kaccit sarve 'nuraktās tvāṃ
kula|putrāḥ pradhānataḥ
kaccit prāṇāṃs tav' ârtheṣu
saṃtyajanti samāhitāḥ.
Kaccij jānapado vidvān dakṣiṇaḥ pratibhānavān

render him the least assistance. Yet even a single minister who is clever, brave, capable and knowledgeable can secure great royal fortune for a king or his officer.

I trust you have appointed servants to the tasks appropriate to them, the foremost servants to the most important tasks, the middling to the middling ones and the lowly to the low. I trust you appoint your principal ministers to the principal tasks, men who hold hereditary positions, who are honest and have passed the test of loyalty. People have no reason to despise you, I hope, as sacrificial priests despise an outcaste, or women a lover who takes them brutally. Remember, too, that a shrewd man with cunning schemes, a servant prone to corruption, or a man who is bold and hungry for power will slay you if you do not strike first. 94.20

I trust you have appointed as your general a bold and brave man, one who is steady, sagacious, honest, highborn, loyal and capable. You show honor and esteem to your foremost soldiers, I trust, the courageous, powerful men who are skilled in battle and have already evinced their heroism. I trust you pay, when payment is due, the appropriate wages and rations to your army, and do not defer them. If the time for their wages and rations is missed, servants grow angry with their masters and are easily corrupted—and this, as it is set down in the texts, can lead to very great misfortune. 94.25

I hope everyone has remained loyal to you, especially the men of good family, and would willingly give up his life in your cause. I trust you always choose a man of the provinces as your envoy, Bhárata, a wise, diplomatic, perceptive and discerning man, who repeats exactly what he is told. I trust you have come to learn the minds of the eighteen chief 94.30

yath"|ôkta|vādī dūtas te kṛto Bharata paṇḍitaḥ.
Kaccid aṣṭādaś' ânyeṣu sva|pakṣe daśa pañca ca
tribhis tribhir avijñātair vetsi tīrthāni cārakaiḥ.
Kaccid vyapāstān ahitān pratiyātāṃś ca sarvadā
durbalān an|avajñāya vartase ripu|sūdana.
Kaccin na lokāyatikān brāhmaṇāṃs tāta sevase
an|artha kuśalā hy ete bālāḥ paṇḍitamāninaḥ.
Dharma|śāstreṣu mukhyeṣu vidyamāneṣu durbudhāḥ
buddhimān vīkṣikīṃ prāpya nirartheṃ pravadanti te.

Vīrair adhyuṣitāṃ pūrvam asmākaṃ tāta pūrvakaiḥ
satya|nāmāṃ dṛḍhadvārāṃ hasty|aśva|ratha|saṃkulām,
Brāhmaṇaiḥ kṣatriyair vaiśyaiḥ sva|karma|nirataiḥ sadā
jit'|êndriyair mah"|ôtsāhair vṛtāmātyaiḥ sahasraśaḥ,
Prāsādair vividhākārair vṛtāṃ vaidyajanākulām
kaccit samuditāṃ sphītām Ayodhyāṃ parirakṣasi.

Kaccic caityaśatair juṣṭaḥ suniviṣṭajanākulaḥ
devasthānaiḥ prapābhiś ca taḍāgaiś c' ôpaśobhitaḥ.
Prahṛṣṭanaranārīkaḥ samājotsavaśobhitaḥ
sukṛṣṭasīmā paśumān hiṃsābhir abhivarjitaḥ.
Adevamātṛko ramyaḥ śvāpadaiḥ parivarjitaḥ
kaccij jana|padaḥ sphītaḥ sukhaṃ vasati Rāghava.
Kaccit te dayitāḥ sarve kṛṣi|gorakṣa|jīvinaḥ
vārtāyāṃ saṃśritas tāta loko hi sukham edhate.

officials in each foreign state, and the fifteen of your own, by means of undetectable spies, three for every official. I hope, crusher of your foes, you do not wrongly view as harmless any hostile men who, once deported, have made their way back. You do not, I hope, associate with *brahmans* who are materialists, dear brother. Their only skill is in bringing misfortune; they are fools who think themselves wise. Although preeminent texts on righteous conduct are ready to hand, those ignorant fellows derive their ideas from logic alone and so propound utter nonsense.

I trust you are keeping Ayódhya content and prosperous, dear brother, the city where from ancient times our heroic ancestors have lived. I trust the city with its sturdy gates is still true to its name, 'The Impregnable,' still thronging with elephants, horses and chariots, still crowded with nobles by the thousand—*brahmans*, *kshátriya* and *vaishyas*—every 94.35
one of them remaining, as always, prompt in his own tasks, self-controlled and energetic. I trust the city is still crowded with mansions of various construction and thronged with learned people.

I trust that the countryside is still prospering, Rágha-va, and that life there continues comfortable, with shrines abounding by the hundred, with sanctuaries, wells and pools lending their adornment. I trust that the people are well settled, and the men and women happy; that fairs and festivals lend their adornment, and that the boundary lines are well spaced. The land is still rich in cattle and free from disasters, I trust, still nourished beyond the whim of the rain god, still lovely and safe from wild beasts. I hope you 94.40

Teṣāṃ gupti|parīhāraiḥ kaccit te bharaṇaṃ kṛtam
rakṣyā hi rājñā dharmeṇa sarve viṣaya|vāsinaḥ.

Kaccit striyaḥ sāntvayasi kaccit tāś ca surakṣitāḥ
kaccin na śraddadhāsy āsāṃ kaccid guhyaṃ na bhāṣase.
Kaccin nāga|vanaṃ guptaṃ kuñjarāṇaṃ ca tṛpyasi
kaccid darśayase nityaṃ manuṣyāṇāṃ vibhūṣitam
utthāy' ôtthāya pūrvāhṇe rāja|putra mahā|pathe.
Kaccit sarvāṇi durgāṇi dhana|dhānya'|āyudh'|ôdakaiḥ
yantraiś ca paripūrṇāni tathā śilpi|dhanur|dharaiḥ.

94.45 Āyas te vipulaḥ kaccit kaccid alpataro vyayaḥ
apātreṣu na te kaccit kośo gacchati Rāghava.
Devat"|ârthe ca pitr|arthe brāhmaṇ'|âbhyāgateṣu ca
yodheṣu mitra|vargeṣu kaccid gacchati te vyayaḥ.
Kaccid āryo viśuddh'|ātmā kṣāritaś cora|karmaṇā
aprṣṭaḥ śāstra|kuśalair na lobhād badhyate śuciḥ.
Gṛhītaś c' âiva pṛṣṭaś ca kāle dṛṣṭaḥ sa|kāraṇaḥ
kaccin na mucyate coro dhana|lobhān nara|ṛṣabha.

Vyasane kaccid āḍhyasya durgatasya ca Rāghava
arthaṃ virāgāḥ paśyanti tav' âmātyā bahu|śrutāḥ.

94.50 Yāni mithy"|âbhiśastānāṃ patanty asrāṇi Rāghava
tāni putra|paśūn ghnanti prīty|artham anuśāsataḥ.
Kaccid vṛdhāṃś ca bālāṃś ca vaidya|mukhyāṃś ca Rāghava

cherish all men who make their living by farming and cattle-raising; for a well-founded economy, dear brother, promotes the world's happiness. I trust, then, that you support them with protective and defensive measures. A king must, in accordance with the ways of righteousness, guard all who live in his realm.

I hope you gladden your women and guard them well, but do not place too much trust in them and tell them secrets. You are protecting the elephant forests, I trust, and attending to the needs of the elephants. I trust you often rise early, prince, and display yourself in full array to the people on the thoroughfares. I trust all the forts are well stocked with money, grain, weapons and water, with machines of war and craftsmen and archers.

Your revenues far exceed your expenditures, I hope, and 94.45
your treasure never passes into unworthy hands, Rághava. I trust your expenditures go for the gods and ancestors, *brahman*s and guests, the soldiers and hosts of allies. No noble, honest man is ever charged with theft, I hope, without being interrogated by men learned in the sacred texts; and, if innocent, is never imprisoned out of greed. And when a thief, either caught in the act or discovered with the stolen property, has been seized and interrogated, I hope he is never set free, bull among men, out of greed for money.

I trust your wise ministers, Rághava, render judgment impartially when a rich man and a poor man are engaged in a suit. For the tears people shed when falsely accused come 94.50
to slay the livestock and children of the king who rules for personal gain. I trust you make use of the three means, Rághava—affection, kind words and gifts—in showing regard

dānena manasā vācā tribhir etair bubhūṣase.
Kaccid gurūṃś ca vṛddhāṃś ca tāpasān devat"|âtithīn
caityāṃś ca sarvān siddh'|ârthān brāhmaṇāṃś ca namasyasi.
Kaccid arthena vā dharmaṃ dharmaṃ dharmeṇa vā punaḥ
ubhau vā prīti|lobhena kāmena na vibādhase.
Kaccid arthaṃ ca dharmaṃ ca kāmaṃ ca jayatāṃ vara
vibhajya kāle kālajña sarvān Bharata sevase.

94.55 Kaccit te brāhmaṇāḥ śarma sarva|śāstr'|ârtha|kovidaḥ
āśaṃsante mahā|prājña paura|jānapadaiḥ saha.
Nāstikyam anṛtaṃ krodhaṃ pramādaṃ dīrgha|sūtratām
a|darśanaṃ jñānavatām ālasyaṃ pañca|vṛttitām.
Eka|cintanam arthānām an|arthajñaiś ca mantraṇam
niścitānām an|ārambhaṃ mantrasy' âparilakṣaṇam.
Maṅgalasy' âprayogaṃ ca pratyutthānaṃ ca sarvaśaḥ:
kaccit tvaṃ varjayasy etān rāja|doṣāṃś catur|daśa.
Kaccit svādu|kṛtaṃ bhojyam eko n' âśnāsi Rāghava
kaccid āśaṃsamānebhyo mitrebhyaḥ saṃprayacchasi.»

95.1 Rāmasya vacanaṃ śrutvā Bharataḥ pratyuvāca ha:
«kiṃ me dharmād vihīnasya rāja|dharmaḥ kariṣyati?
Śāśvato 'yaṃ sadā dharmaḥ sthito 'smāsu nara|ṛṣabha:
jyeṣṭha putre sthite rājan na kanīyān bhaven nṛpaḥ.
Sa samṛddhāṃ mayā sārdham Ayodhyāṃ gaccha Rāghava

for children, the aged and the foremost learned *brahman*. You pay homage to your *guru*s, I trust, to the aged, to ascetics, guests and gods, to shrines and all accomplished *brahman*s. You never deny the claims of righteousness in the name of statecraft, I trust, or again, the claims of statecraft in the name of righteousness, or either of them—from lust for pleasure—in the name of personal desire. Foremost of champions, I trust you make due allocation of tone—and you are aware of the proper time for each, Bhárata—and attend to all three, to matters of righteousness, of the state, and of personal desire.

I hope the *brahman*s who comprehend the meaning of 94.55
all the sacred texts, and the people of the city and provinces, too, wish you happiness, my wise brother. I trust you avoid the fourteen errors of kings: atheism; falsehood; irascibility; inattention; procrastination; shunning the wise; indolence; sensual indulgence; solitary determination of political affairs; taking counsel with those ignorant of such affairs; failure to execute your decisions, to keep your counsel secret, or to employ auspicious rites; and indiscriminate courtesy. I trust you never eat savory foods all by yourself, Rághava, and that you give aid to allies when they request it."

After listening to Rama's words, Bhárata replied, 95.1
"What good is it for me to know the right conduct of kings, when I am wholly lost to righteousness? There is an ancient practice of righteousness, bull among men, one established among us for all time. It is this: with the eldest brother living, your majesty, a younger may not become king. So

abhiṣecaya c' ātmānaṃ kulasy' âsya bhavāya naḥ.
Rājānaṃ mānuṣaṃ prāhur devatve saṃmato mama
yasya dharm'|ârtha|sahitaṃ vṛttam āhur amānuṣam.
Kekayasthe ca mayi tu tvayi c' âraṇyam āśrite
divam ārya|gato rājā yāyajūkaḥ satāṃ mataḥ.
Uttiṣṭha puruṣa|vyāghra kriyatām udakaṃ pituḥ
ahaṃ c' âyaṃ ca Śatrughnaḥ pūrvam eva kṛt'|ôdakau.
Priyeṇa kila dattaṃ hi pitṛ|lokeṣu Rāghava
akṣayyaṃ bhavatīty āhur bhavāṃś c' âiva pituḥ priyaḥ.»

Tāṃ śrutvā karuṇāṃ vācaṃ pitur maraṇa|saṃhitām
Rāghavo Bharaten' ôktāṃ babhūva gata|cetanaḥ.
Vāg|vajraṃ Bharaten' ôktam a|manojñaṃ paraṃ|tapaḥ
pragṛhya bāhū Rāmo vai puṣpit'|âgro yathā drumaḥ
vane paraśunā kṛttas tathā bhuvi papāta ha.
Tathā hi patitaṃ Rāmaṃ jagatyāṃ jagatī|patim
kūla|ghāta|pariśrāntaṃ prasuptam iva kuñjaram.
Bhrātaras te maheṣvāsaṃ sarvataḥ śoka|karśitam
rudantaḥ saha Vaidehyā siṣicuḥ salilena vai.
Sa tu saṃjñāṃ punar labdhvā netrābhyām āsram utsṛjan
upākrāmata Kākutsthaḥ kṛpaṇaṃ bahu bhāṣitum:

«Kiṃ nu tasya mayā kāryaṃ durjātena mah"|ātmanā?
yo mṛto mama śokena na mayā c' âpi saṃskṛtaḥ.
Aho Bharata siddh'|ârtho yena rājā tvay" ânagha
Śatrugheṇa ca sarveṣu preta|kṛtyeṣu sat|kṛtaḥ.
Niṣpradhānām anek'|âgraṃ nar'|êndreṇa vinā|kṛtām

come back with me, Rághava, to the prosperous city of Ayódhya, and have yourself consecrated for the good of our House. Some say a king is but a mortal; I esteem him a god. His conduct in matters of righteousness and statecraft, it is rightly said, is beyond that of mere mortals. While I was 95.5
still in the land of the Kékayas, my brother, and you had withdrawn to the wilderness, the king, a man esteemed by the good, a performer of sacrifices, went to heaven. Arise, tiger among men, make the funeral libation to Father. Shatrúghna here and I have already done so. It is said, Rághava, that what a well-loved person gives to those in the world of the ancestors abides forever—and Father loved you well."

When he heard Bhárata's piteous words that told him of his father's death—the dreadful words Bhárata spoke, which struck him like a bolt of lightning—Rama Rághava, slayer of enemies, lost consciousness. Throwing out his arms he fell to the ground like a flowering tree in the forest cut down by an axe. Fallen upon the earth, Rama, the lord 95.10
of earth, resembled a bull elephant asleep, grown weary from striking a riverbank. His three brothers and Vaidéhi wept as they sprinkled water upon him, the great bowman, utterly broken by grief. Soon Kakútstha revived, and with tears trickling from his eyes he began a long and sorrowful lament:

"What good was I, a wretched son, to my great father? He died of grief for me, and I could not even perform the final rites for him. Oh Bhárata, my blameless brother, you have achieved your greatest goal, you and Shatrúghna, since you could honor the king with all the rites for the dead. Ayódh- 95.15
ya is bereft of the lord of men; it no longer has its chief, no

nivṛtta|vana|vāso 'pi n' Âyodhyāṃ gantum utsahe.
Samāpta|vana|vāsaṃ mām Ayodhyāyāṃ paraṃ|tapa.
ko nu śāsiṣyati punas tāte lok'|ântaraṃ gate?
Purā prekṣya suvṛttaṃ māṃ pitā yāny āha sāntvayan
vākyāni tāni śroṣyāmi. kutaḥ karṇa|sukhāny aham?»
Evam uktvā sa Bharataṃ bhāryām abhyetya Rāghavaḥ
uvāca śoka|saṃtaptaḥ pūrṇa|candra|nibh'|ānanām:

«Sīte mṛtas te śvaśuraḥ pitrā hīno 'si Lakṣmaṇa
Bharato duḥkham ācaṣṭe svar|gataṃ pṛthivī|patim.»

95.20 Sāntvayitvā tu tāṃ Rāmo rudantīṃ Janak'|ātmajām
uvāca Lakṣmaṇaṃ tatra duḥkhito duḥkhitaṃ vacaḥ:
«Ānay' êṅgudi|piṇyākaṃ cīram āhara c' ôttaram
jala|kriy"|ârthaṃ tātasya gamiṣyāmi mah"|ātmanaḥ.
Sītā purastād vrajatu tvam enām abhito vraja
ahaṃ paścād gamiṣyāmi gatir hy eṣā sudāruṇā.»
Tato nity'|ânugas teṣāṃ vidit'|ātmā mahā|matiḥ
mṛdur dāntaś ca śāntaś ca Rāme ca dṛḍha|bhaktimān
Sumantras tair nṛpa|sutaiḥ sārdham āśvāsya Rāghavam
avātārayad ālambya nadīṃ Mandākinīṃ śivām.

longer has direction. Even were my stay in the forest over, I could not bear to go back. When my stay in the forest is at an end, slayer of enemies, who will there be in Ayódhya ever again to give me guidance, now that father has gone to the other world? In the past when Father noticed good conduct on my part, he would say such gratifying things to me, so pleasant to hear. From whom am I to hear them now?" When he finished speaking to Bhárata, Rághava approached his wife, her face like the full moon, and consumed with grief he said to her:

"Sita, your father-in-law is dead, and you, Lákshmana, have lost your father. Bhárata has brought the sorrowful news that the lord of earth has gone to heaven."

As Kakútstha spoke, still more copious tears welled up in the eyes of the glorious young men. All three brothers did what they could to solace him, and they told him, "Let the funeral libation be offered to Father, the master of the world." When Sita heard that her father-in-law the king had gone to heaven, tears so flooded her eyes that she no longer could see her husband. As the daughter of Jána- 95.20
ka wept, Rama comforted her. Lost in sorrow he then said sorrowfully to Lákshmana: "Bring me a cake of almond meal and fetch an upper garment of bark cloth. I will go to make the funeral libation for our great father. Let Sita proceed in front, and you next, while I go at the rear, for such is the procession of mourning." Their constant attendant, the celebrated Sumántra, a high-minded and gentle man, self-restrained, tranquil and staunchly devoted to Rama, joined the princes in solacing Rághava. Then, lending support, he escorted him down to the gracious Mandákini River.

95.25 Te sutīrthāṃ tataḥ kṛcchrād upāgamya yaśasvinaḥ
nadīṃ Mandākinīṃ ramyāṃ sadā puṣpita|kānanām
Śīghra|srotasam āsādya tīrthaṃ śivam akardamam
siṣicus tūdakaṃ «rājñe tata etad bhavatv iti.»

Pragṛhya ca mahī|pālo jala|pūritam añjalim
diśaṃ yāmyām abhimukho rudan vacanam abravīt:
«Etat te rāja|śārdūla vimalaṃ toyam a|kṣayam
pitṛ|loka|gatasy' âdya mad|dattam upatiṣṭhatu!»
Tato Mandākinī tīrāt pratyuttīrya sa Rāghavaḥ
pituś cakāra tejasvī nivāpaṃ bhrātṛbhiḥ saha.
95.30 Aiṅgudaṃ badarī|miśraṃ piṇyākaṃ darbha|saṃstare
nyasya Rāmaḥ suduḥkh'|ārto rudan vacanam abravīt:
«Idaṃ bhuṅkṣva mahā|rāja prīto yad|aśanā vayam
yad|annaḥ puruṣo bhavati tad|annās tasya devatāḥ.»

Tatas ten' âiva mārgeṇa pratyuttīrya nadī|taṭāt
āruroha nara|vyāghro ramya|sānuṃ mahī|dharam.
Tataḥ parṇa|kuṭī|dvāram āsādya jagatī|patiḥ
parijagrāha pāṇibhyām ubhau Bharata|Lakṣmaṇau.
Teṣāṃ tu rudatāṃ śabdāt pratiśrutk" âbhavad girau
bhrātṝṇāṃ saha Vaidehyā siṃhānāṃ nardatām iva.
95.35 Vijñāya tumulaṃ śabdaṃ trastā Bharata|sainikāḥ
abruvaṃś c' âpi: «Rāmeṇa Bharataḥ saṃgato dhruvam
teṣām eva mahāñ śabdaḥ śocatāṃ pitaraṃ mṛtam.»
Atha vāsān parityajya taṃ sarve 'bhimukhāḥ svanam

In pain the glorious princes made their way to the charming bathing place on the lovely Mandákini River, where the woodlands were always in flower, and the current ran swiftly. And on reaching the landing, gracious and sparkling clear, they sprinkled water for the king with the words, "Father, let this be for you." 95.25

The protector of the earth held out a handful of water, and facing the direction of Yama he said, weeping: "O tiger among kings, may this pure water I now give you be at your disposal in the world of the ancestors and abide forever." Mighty Rághava then ascended from the bathing place on the Mandákini and in the company of his brothers made the offering of food to his father. Upon a spread of *darbha* 95.30 grass Rama deposited the cake of almond meal mixed with fruit of the jujube tree. And weeping in the anguish of his deep sorrow, he said: "Be pleased to eat this, great king, such food as we ourselves now eat, for a man's gods must feed on the same food as he."

The tiger among men ascended from the riverbank and by the same way he had come climbed up the lovely slope of the mountain. On reaching the door of his leaf-hut the lord of the world clasped both Bhárata and Lákshmana in his arms. All the brothers and Vaidéhi began to weep, and the mountain echoed with the sound, as of lions roaring. Bhára- 95.35 ta's soldiers were alarmed when they heard the tumultuous sound. "Bhárata must surely have met with Rama," they said. "The loud sound must be their grieving over their dead father." With one mind they all left their camps and raced off in the direction of the noise, following where it led them. Some went on horses or elephants, others—the

apy eka|manaso jagmur yathā|sthānaṃ pradhāvitāḥ.
Hayair anye gajair anye rathair anye svalaṃkṛtaiḥ
sukumārās tath" âiv' ânye padbhir eva narā yayuḥ.
Acira|proṣitaṃ Rāmaṃ cira|viproṣitaṃ yathā
draṣṭu|kāmo janaḥ sarvo jagāma sahas" āśramam.
Bhrātṝṇāṃ tvaritās te tu draṣṭu|kāmāḥ samāgamam
yayur bahu|vidhair yānaiḥ khura|nemi|samākulaiḥ.
95.40 Sā bhūmir bahubhir yānaiḥ khura|nemi|samāhatā
mumoca tumulaṃ śabdaṃ dyaur iv' âbhra|samāgame.
Tena vitrāsitā nāgāḥ kareṇu|parivāritāḥ
āvāsayanto gandhena jagmur anyad vanaṃ tataḥ.
Varāha|mṛga|siṃhāś ca mahiṣāḥ sa|rkṣa|vānarāḥ
vyāghra|gokarṇa|gavayā vitreṣuḥ pṛṣataiḥ saha.
Rath'|âṅga|sāhvā natyūhā haṃsāḥ kāraṇḍavāḥ plavāḥ
tathā puṃs|kokilāḥ krauñcā visaṃjñā bhejire diśaḥ.
Tena śabdena vitrastair ākāśaṃ pakṣibhir vṛtam
manuṣyair āvṛtā bhūmir ubhayaṃ prababhau tadā.
95.45 Tān narān bāṣpa|pūrṇ'|âkṣān samīkṣy' âtha suduḥkhitān
paryaṣvajata dharmajñaḥ pitṛvan mātṛvac ca saḥ.
Sa tatra kāṃś cit pariṣasvaje narān
narāś ca ke cit tu tam abhyavādayan
cakāra sarvān sa|vayasya|bāndhavān
yath"|ârham āsādya tadā nṛp'|ātmajaḥ.
Tataḥ sa teṣāṃ rudatāṃ mah"|ātmanāṃ
bhuvaṃ ca khaṃ c' ânuvināday an svanaḥ
guhā girīṇāṃ ca diśaś ca saṃtataṃ
mṛdaṅga|ghoṣa|pratimo viśuśruve.

96.1 Vasiṣṭhaḥ purataḥ kṛtvā dārān Daśarathasya ca
abhicakrāma taṃ deśaṃ Rāma|darśana|tarṣitaḥ.
Rāja|patnyaś ca gacchantyo mandaṃ Mandākinīṃ prati

delicate ones—on ornate chariots, while the rest of the men went on foot.

All the people rushed to the ashram, yearning to see Rama, for, though his absence had been brief, it had seemed so very long. Yearning to see the reunion of the brothers, they hurried off on every sort of vehicle, in a flurry of hoofs and wheels. Struck by the hoofs and wheels of the many 95.40
vehicles, the earth gave off a tumultuous sound, like the heavens when storm clouds gather. The sound frightened the bull elephants and the cows in their train, and they ran off to another part of the forest, perfuming the way with their scent. Boars, deer, lions, buffaloes, apes, monkeys, tigers, cow-eared antelopes and wild oxen were terrified, as well as the dappled antelopes. Sheldrakes, moorhens, geese, ducks, plovers, cuckoos and curlews took to the horizons in a blind rush. The sky appeared to be as covered with birds frightened at the sound as did the earth with men.

Righteous Rama then caught sight of the tearful, sor- 95.45
rowing men, and like a father or a mother he embraced them. The prince embraced some men, while others did obeisance to him; his presence restored to all of them, each according to his station, their one true kinsman or one true friend. The great men wept, and the noise made earth and heaven echo incessantly, through the mountain caves and in all directions, with a sound like the roll of bass drums.

Placing the wives of Dasha·ratha before him, Vasísh- 96.1
tha set out for that spot, longing to see Rama. Proceeding slowly toward the Mandákini, the wives of the king soon

dadṛśus tatra tat tīrthaṃ Rāma|Lakṣmaṇa|sevitam.
Kausalyā bāṣpa|pūrṇena mukhena pariśuṣyatā
Sumitrām abravīd dīnā yāś c' ânyā rāja|yoṣitaḥ:
«Idaṃ teṣām a|nāthānāṃ kliṣṭam akliṣṭa|karmaṇām
vane prāk kevalaṃ tīrthaṃ ye te nirviṣayī kṛtāḥ!
96.5 Itaḥ Sumitre putras te sadā jalam a|tandritaḥ
svayaṃ harati Saumitrir mama putrasya kāraṇāt.»

Dakṣiṇ'|âgreṣu darbheṣu sā dadarśa mahī|tale
pitur iṅgudi|piṇyākaṃ nyastam āyata|locanā.
Taṃ bhūmau pitur ārtena nyastaṃ Rāmeṇa vīkṣya sā
uvāca devī Kausalyā sarvā Daśaratha|striyaḥ:
«Idam Ikṣvāku|nāthasya Rāghavasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
Rāghaveṇa pitur dattaṃ paśyat" âitad yathā|vidhi.
Tasya deva|samānasya pārthivasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
n' âitad aupayikaṃ manye bhukta|bhogasya bhojanam.
96.10 Catur|antāṃ mahīṃ bhuktvā mah"|êndra|sadṛśo bhuvi
katham iṅgudi|piṇyākaṃ sa bhuṅkte vasudh"|âdhipaḥ?
Ato duḥkhataraṃ loke na kiṃ cit pratibhāti mā
yatra Rāmaḥ pitur dadyād iṅgudī|kṣodam ṛddhimān.
Rāmeṇ' eṅgudi|piṇyākaṃ pitur dattaṃ samīkṣya me
kathaṃ duḥkhena hṛdayaṃ na sphoṭati sahasradhā?»

spied the bathing place Rama and Lákshmana frequented. Kausálya's throat was choked with sobs, and her mouth went dry as she spoke in her desolation to Sumítra and the other wives of the king: "This must be where they come to bathe—poor children. It has recently been disturbed by them, whom nothing had ever disturbed before. Once it was deserted, off here in the forest—but they have been driven from their country! It must be from here, Sumítra, 96.5
that your son Saumítri, constantly and without flagging, has to fetch water himself on my son's behalf."

On the ground the large-eyed woman saw the cake of almond meal for the father deposited upon the *darbha* grass, whose blades pointed toward the south. And when Queen Kausálya observed what had been deposited on the ground by Rama in anguish for his father, she said to all of Da-sha·ratha's women: "Look at this. It was offered by Rághava according to precept to his father, the great Rághava, the leader of the Ikshvákus. But how unseemly a food I find it for the great and godlike king, who enjoyed so many delicacies. He had the whole four-cornered earth for his 96.10
enjoyment; he was great Indra's equal on earth. How is it possible that the lord of the land has now but a cake of almond meal for food? No greater sorrow than this has the world to show me, that the once-prosperous Rama should have only such meal to offer his father. And I have before my very eyes the cake Rama offered his father—how is it, then, my heart does not burst for sorrow into a thousand pieces?"

Evam ārtāṃ sapatnyas tā jagmur āśvāsya tāṃ tadā
dadṛśuś c' āśrame Rāmaṃ svargāc cyutam iv' âmaram
Sarva|bhogaiḥ parityaktaṃ Rāma saṃprekṣya mātaraḥ
ārtā mumucur aśrūṇi sa|svaraṃ śoka|karśitāḥ
96.15 Tāsāṃ Rāmaḥ samutthāya jagrāha caraṇāñ śubhān
mātṝṇāṃ manuja|vyāghraḥ sarvāsāṃ satya|saṃgaraḥ
Tāḥ pāṇibhiḥ sukha|sparśair mṛdv|aṅguli|talaiḥ śubhaiḥ
pramamārjū rajaḥ pṛṣṭhād Rāmasy' āyata|locanāḥ
Saumitrir api tāḥ sarvā mātṝḥ saṃprekṣya duḥkhitaḥ
abhyavādayat' âsaktaṃ śanai Rāmād anantaram
Yathā Rāme tathā tasmin sarvā vavṛtire striyaḥ
vṛttiṃ Daśarathāj jāte Lakṣmaṇe śubha|lakṣaṇe

Sīt" âpi caraṇāṃs tāsām upasaṃgṛhya duḥkhitā
śvaśrūṇām aśru|pūrṇ'|âkṣī sā babhūv' âgrataḥ sthitā.
96.20 Tāṃ pariṣvajya duḥkh'|ārtāṃ mātā duhitaraṃ yathā
vana|vāsa|kṛśāṃ dīnāṃ Kausalyā vākyam abravīt:
«Videha|rājasya sutā snuṣā Daśarathasya ca
Rāma|patnī kathaṃ duḥkhaṃ saṃprāptā nirjane vane?
Padmam ātapa|saṃtaptaṃ parikliṣṭam iv' ôtpalam
kāñcanaṃ rajasā dhvastaṃ kliṣṭaṃ candram iv' âmbudaiḥ.
Mukhaṃ te prekṣya māṃ śoko dahaty agnir iv' āśrayam
bhṛśaṃ manasi Vaidehi vyasan'|âraṇi|saṃbhavaḥ.»

Such were her anguished words, and her co-wives tried to comfort her. They continued on, then, and soon caught sight of Rama in the ashram, resembling a deathless god fallen from heaven. As his mothers gazed at Rama, who was denied now every luxury, they were anguished and racked with grief and broke out in shrill weeping. Rama, tiger 96.15
among men, a man always true to his promise, rose and clasped the lovely feet of all his mothers. And the large-eyed women brushed the dust from his back with their lovely hands, with their soft fingers and palms so pleasant to the touch. Saumítri, too, was overcome with sorrow as he gazed at all his mothers. He did obeisance to them after Rama, slowly and clingingly. And all the women treated good Lákshmana, a son born of Dasha·ratha, exactly as they treated Rama.

Sita, too, sorrowfully grasped the feet of her mothers-in-law and stood before them, her eyes brimming with tears. Just as a mother would embrace her own daughter, Kausálya 96.20
embraced Sita as she stood anguished with sorrow, desolate and haggard from her stay in the forest. And she said to her: "How is it possible that the daughter of the king of Vidéha, the daughter-in-law of Dasha·ratha, the wife of Rama, should have to live a life of pain in the desolate forest? Your face is like a lotus scorched by sunshine, like a withered lily, or gold caked with dirt, or the moon obscured by clouds, and as I look at it, grief consumes me as fire consumes its bed—a wild grief, here, in my heart, Vaidéhi, kindled by this calamity."

Bruvantyām evam ārtāyāṃ jananyāṃ Bharat'|âgrajaḥ
pādāv āsādya jagrāha Vasiṣṭhasya sa Rāghavaḥ.
96.25 Purohitasy' âgni|samasya tasya
vai Bṛhaspater indra iv' âmar'|âdhipaḥ
pragṛhya pādau susamṛddha|tejasaḥ
sah' âiva ten' ôpaviveśa Rāghavaḥ.
Tato jaghanyaṃ sahitaiḥ sa mantribhiḥ
pura|pradhānaiś ca sah' âiva sainikaiḥ
janena dharmajña|tamena dharmavān
upopaviṣṭo Bharatas tad" âgrajam.
Upopaviṣṭas tu tadā sa vīryavāṃs
tapasvi|veṣeṇa samīkṣya Rāghavam
śriyā jvalantaṃ Bharataḥ kṛt'|âñjalir
yathā mah"|êndraḥ prayataḥ Prajāpatim.
«Kim eṣa vākyaṃ Bharato 'dya Rāghavaṃ
praṇamya sat|kṛtya ca sādhu vakṣyati?»
it' îva tasy' ārya|janasya tattvato
babhūva kautūhalam uttamaṃ tadā.
Sa Rāghavaḥ satya|dhṛtiś ca Lakṣmaṇo
mahānubhāvo Bharataś ca dhārmikaḥ
vṛtāḥ suhṛdbhiś ca virejur adhvare
yathā sadasyaiḥ sahitās trayo 'gnayaḥ.

97.1 Taṃ tu Rāmaḥ samāśvāsya bhrātaraṃ guru|vatsalam
Lakṣmaṇena saha bhrātrā praṣṭuṃ samupacakrame:
«Kim etad iccheyam ahaṃ śrotuṃ pravyāhṛtaṃ tvayā
yasmāt tvam āgato deśam imaṃ cīra|jaṭ"|âjinī.
Yan|nimittam imaṃ deśaṃ kṛṣṇ'|âjina|jaṭā|dharaḥ
hitvā rājyaṃ praviṣṭas tvaṃ tat sarvaṃ vaktum arhasi.»
Ity uktaḥ Kekayī|putraḥ Kākutsthena mah"|ātmanā

As his mother was speaking in her anguish, Bhárata's elder brother made his way to Vasíshtha and clasped his feet. Rághava grasped the feet of the fiery and brilliant family 96.25
priest just as Indra, overlord of the deathless gods, might grasp Brihas·pati's, and together they took their seats. Lastly, righteous Bhárata sat down near his elder brother, and with him sat the counsellors, the leading men of the city, the soldiers and the people most wise in the ways of righteousness. As mighty Bhárata sat next to him and gazed at him dressed as an ascetic, yet radiant with majesty, he humbly cupped his hands in reverence, like great Indra before Praja·pati. "Just what will Bhárata say to Rághava now, after bowing to him and showing him honor?" the nobles wondered and waited with truly great curiosity. Surrounded by their friends the brothers sat—truthful Rághava, high-minded Lákshmana and righteous Bhárata—like the three fires at a sacred rite with the officiants gathered all around.

Now, when Rama had comforted his brother Bhárata, 97.1
who so cherished his *guru*, he and his brother Lákshmana began to question him: "I should like to hear from your own lips what all this means, why you have come to this region in bark cloth, hides and matted hair. For what reason did you leave the kingdom and enter this region wearing black hides and matted hair? Please, tell me everything."

So great Kakútstha spoke, and the son of Kaikéyi cupped

pragṛhya balavad bhūyaḥ prāñjalir vākyam abravīt:
«Āryaṃ tātaḥ parityajya kṛtvā karma suduṣkaram
gataḥ svargaṃ mahā|bāhuḥ putra|śok'|âbhipīḍitaḥ.
Striyā niyuktaḥ Kaikeyyā mama mātrā paraṃ|tapa
cakāra sumahat pāpam idam ātma|yaśo|haram.
Sā rājya|phalam aprāpya vidhavā śoka|karśitā
patiṣyati mahā|ghore niraye jananī mama.
Tasya me dāsa|bhūtasya prasādaṃ kartum arhasi
abhiṣiñcasva c' âdy' âiva rājyena Maghavān iva.
Imāḥ prakṛtayaḥ sarvā vidhavā māturaś ca yāḥ
tvat|sakāśam anuprāptāḥ prasādaṃ kartum arhasi.
Tad|ānupūrvyā yuktaṃ ca yuktaṃ c' ātmani mānada
rājyaṃ prāpnuhi dharmeṇa sa|kāmān suhṛdaḥ kuru.
Bhavatv avidhavā bhūmiḥ samagrā patinā tvayā
śaśinā vimalen' êva śāradī rajanī yathā.
Ebhiś ca sacivaiḥ sārdhaṃ śirasā yācito mayā
bhrātuḥ śiṣyasya dāsasya prasādaṃ kartum arhasi.
Tad idaṃ śāśvataṃ pitryaṃ sarvaṃ saciva|maṇḍalam
pūjitaṃ puruṣa|vyāghra n' âtikramitum utsahe.»
Evam uktvā mahā|bāhuḥ sa|bāṣpaḥ Kekayī|sutaḥ
Rāmasya śirasā pādau jagrāha Bharataḥ punaḥ.
Taṃ mattam iva mātaṅgaṃ niḥśvasantaṃ punaḥ punaḥ
bhrātaraṃ Bharataṃ Rāmaḥ pariṣvajy' êdam abravīt:
«Kulīnaḥ sattva|saṃpannas tejasvī carita|vrataḥ
rājya|hetoḥ kathaṃ pāpam ācaret tvad|vidho janaḥ?

his hands in reverence once more, and, holding them out stiffly, replied: "It was grave wrongdoing for our great-armed 97.5
father to repudiate my noble brother. And grief for his son so tortured him that he went to heaven. Under the constraint of a woman—my mother, Kaikéyi—he committed this great evil, slayer of foes, which robbed him of his glory. But my mother never achieved her goal, the kingship. And now she is a widow racked with grief, who must fall into the most abominable hell. Please show your grace to me, your slave. Have yourself consecrated, like Indra the munificent, into the kingship this very day. All these subjects and your widowed mothers have betaken themselves to you. Please, show them your grace.

It is proper both by reason of succession and by virtue of 97.10
the man himself. O giver of honor, assume the kingship as is right, and grant your loved ones their desire. Let the earth be a widow no more, but once again complete, with you as her husband, just as the autumn night is made complete by the bright, hare-marked moon. I and all the advisers here are begging you with heads bowed low. Tiger among men, please, show your grace to me, your brother, your pupil and slave, and do not transgress against this whole order of advisers, this ancient, hereditary and venerable order." With these tearful words Bhárata, the great-armed son of Kaikéyi, pressed his head once more to Rama's feet.

And as his brother Bhárata stood heaving sighs like an 97.15
elephant in rut, Rama embraced him and replied: "You are highborn, valorous and mighty, and keep your vows. How would it be possible for one such as you ever to do evil for the sake of kingship? I find no fault with you, crusher of foes,

Na doṣaṃ tvayi paśyāmi sūkṣmam apy ari|sūdana
na c' âpi jananīṃ bālyāt tvaṃ vigarhitum arhasi.
Yāvat pitari dharmajña gauravaṃ loka|sat|kṛte
tāvad dharmabhṛtāṃ śreṣṭha jananyām api gauravam.
Etābhyāṃ dharma|śīlābhyāṃ ‹vanaṃ gacch' êti› Rāghava
mātā|pitṛbhyām ukto 'haṃ katham anyat samācare?

97.20 Tvayā rājyam Ayodhyāyāṃ prāptavyaṃ loka|sat|kṛtam
vastavyaṃ Daṇḍak'|âraṇye mayā valkala|vāsasā.
Evaṃ kṛtvā mahā|rājo vibhāgaṃ loka|saṃnidhau
vyādiśya ca mahā|tejā divaṃ Daśaratho gataḥ.
Sa ca pramāṇaṃ dharm'|ātmā rājā loka|gurus tava
pitrā dattaṃ yathā|bhāgam upabhoktuṃ tvam arhasi.
Catur|daśa samāḥ saumya Daṇḍak'|âraṇyam āśritaḥ
upabhokṣye tv ahaṃ dattaṃ bhāgaṃ pitrā mah"|ātmanā.
Yad abravīn māṃ nara|loka|sat|kṛtaḥ
pitā mah"|ātmā vibudh"|âdhip'|ôpamaḥ
tad eva manye param'|ātmano hitaṃ
na sarva|lok'|êśvara|bhāvam avyayam.»

98.1 Tataḥ puruṣa|siṃhānāṃ vṛtānāṃ taiḥ suhṛd|gaṇaiḥ
śocatām eva rajanī duḥkhena vyatyavartata.
Rajanyāṃ suprabhātāyāṃ bhrātaras te suhṛd|vṛtāḥ
Mandākinyāṃ hutaṃ japyaṃ kṛtvā Rāmam upāgaman.
Tūṣṇīṃ te samupāsīnā na kaś cit kiṃ cid abravīt
Bharatas tu suhṛn|madhye Rāmaṃ vacanam abravīt:

not the slightest. But then, too, you ought not, like a child, reproach your mother. Champion of righteousness, your mother commands as much reverence as our father, who was wise in the ways of righteousness and held in honor by the world. Our father and mother, righteous people both, bade me 'Go to the forest.' How can I do otherwise, Rághava?

It is for you to assume the kingship in Ayódhya, held 97.20
in honor by the world. I must live in the Dándaka wilderness, wearing clothes of bark cloth. Such was the apportionment the great king made in the presence of all the world. And after giving his orders, the mighty Dasha·ratha went to heaven. The righteous king, the *guru* of the world, must be your guide. You must accept what Father bestowed, whatever your portion. For my part, dear brother, I will accept the portion bestowed by our great father and withdraw for fourteen years to the Dándaka wilderness. It is what my great father—who was held in honor by the men of the world, the peer of Indra, overlord of the wise gods—bade me do that I regard as my ultimate good, not sovereign lordship over all the worlds."

THE LIONS AMONG men continued to grieve in the com- 98.1
pany of their hosts of friends, and the night passed, painfully. When night had brightened into dawn, his brothers performed the morning offering and prayers by the Mandákini in the company of their friends, and then returned to Rama. They sat together in silence, no one saying a word, until, from where he sat among their friends, Bhárata addressed Rama:

«Sāntvitā māmikā mātā dattaṃ rājyam idaṃ mama
tad dadāmi tav' âiv' âhaṃ bhuṅkṣva rājyam a|kaṇṭakam.
98.5 Mahat" êv' âmbu|vegena bhinnaḥ setur jal'|āgame
durāvāraṃ tvad|anyena rājya|khaṇḍam idaṃ mahat.
Gatiṃ khara iv' āśvasya Tārkṣyasy' êva patatriṇaḥ
anugantuṃ na śaktir me gatiṃ tava mahī|pate.
Sujīvaṃ nityaśas tasya yaḥ parair upajīvyate
Rāma tena tu durjīvaṃ yaḥ parān upajīvati.
Yathā tu ropito vṛkṣaḥ puruṣeṇa vivardhitaḥ
hrasvakena durāroho rūḍha|skandho mahā|drumaḥ.
Sa yadā puṣpito bhūtvā phalāni na vidarśayet
sa tāṃ n' ânubhavet prītiṃ yasya hetoḥ prabhāvitaḥ.
98.10 Eṣ' ôpamā mahā|bāho tvam arthaṃ vettum arhasi
yadi tvam asmān ṛṣabho bhartā bhṛtyān na śādhi hi.
Śreṇayas tvāṃ mahā|rāja paśyantv agryāś ca sarvaśaḥ
pratapantam iv' ādityaṃ rājye sthitam ariṃ|damam.
Tav' ânuyāne Kākutsṭha mattā nardantu kuñjarāḥ
antaḥ|pura gatā nāryo nandantu susamāhitāḥ.»

Tasya sādhv ity amanyanta nāgarā vividhā janāḥ
Bharatasya vacaḥ śrutvā Rāmaṃ pratyanuyācataḥ.
Tam evaṃ duḥkhitaṃ prekṣya vilapantaṃ yaśasvinam
Rāmaḥ kṛt'|ātmā Bharataṃ samāśvāsayad ātmavān:

"My mother has been satisfied; the kingship has been bestowed on me. And I bestow it on you, and you alone. Enjoy unchallenged kingship. Like a dike washed away by 98.5
a great flood when the rains come, the kingdom will utterly disintegrate unless you prevent it, and no one else can. An ass cannot match the pace of a horse, birds cannot match Tarkshya's pace, nor have I the power to match yours, lord of the land. Life is ever easy when it is others who must depend on you, but how hard life is, Rama, when you must depend on others. It is like when a man plants a tree and nurtures it till it becomes a great tree with spreading branches, impossible for a short man to climb. When the tree comes into flower but shows no fruit—the whole purpose for which it was grown—the man fails to take any pleasure in it. This is a 98.10
simile, my great-armed brother—and you will easily grasp its meaning—for your not ruling over us, a mighty master over his servants. Let the guildsmen, O great king, and all the leading subjects behold you installed in the kingship, tamer of foes, blazing like the sun. Let rutting elephants trumpet in your entourage, Kakútstha; let the women of the inner chamber rejoice with all their hearts."

The various classes of townspeople approved as just the words they heard Bhárata speak in supplication of Rama. Accomplished Rama gazed at glorious Bhárata lamenting in his sorrow, and in full self-possession tried to comfort him:

98.15 N' ātmanaḥ kāma|kāro 'sti puruṣo 'yam anīśvaraḥ
itaś c' êtarataś c' âinaṃ kṛt'|ântaḥ parikarṣati.
Sarve kṣay'|ântā nicayāḥ patan'|ântāḥ samucchrayāḥ
saṃyogā viprayogāntā maraṇāntaṃ ca jīvitam.
Yathā phalānaṃ pakvānāṃ n' ânyatra patanād bhayam
evaṃ narasya jātasya n' ânyatra maraṇād bhayam.
Yath" āgāraṃ dṛḍha|sthūṇaṃ jīrṇaṃ bhūtv" âvasīdati
tath" âvasīdanti narā jarā|mṛtyu|vaśaṃ gatāḥ.
Aho|rātrāṇi gacchanti sarveṣāṃ prāṇināṃ iha
āyūṃṣi kṣapayanty āśu grīṣme jalam iv' âṃśavaḥ.
98.20 Ātmānam anuśoca tvaṃ kim anyam anuśocasi
āyus te hīyate yasya sthitasya ca gatasya ca.
Sah' âiva mṛtyur vrajati saha mṛtyur niṣīdati
gatvā sudīrgham adhvānaṃ saha mṛtyur nivartate.
Gātreṣu valayaḥ prāptāḥ śvetāś c' âiva śiro|ruhāḥ
jarayā puruṣo jīrṇaḥ kiṃ hi kṛtvā prabhāvayet?

Nandanty udita āditye nandanty astam ite ravau
ātmano n' âvabudhyante manuṣyā jīvita|kṣayam.
Hṛṣyanty ṛtu|mukhaṃ dṛṣṭvā navaṃ navam ih' āgatam
ṛtūnāṃ parivartena prāṇināṃ prāṇa|saṃkṣayaḥ.
98.25 Yathā kāṣṭhaṃ ca kāṣṭhaṃ ca sameyātāṃ mah"|ârṇave
sametya ca vyapeyātāṃ kālam āsādya kaṃ cana.
Evaṃ bhāryāś ca putrāś ca jñātayaś ca vasūni ca
sametya vyavadhāvanti dhruvo hy eṣāṃ vin" âbhavaḥ.

N' âtra kaś cid yathā bhāvaṃ prāṇī samabhivartate
tena tasmin na sāmarthyaṃ pretasy' âsty anuśocataḥ.
Yathā hi sārthaṃ gacchantaṃ brūyāt kaś cit pathi sthitaḥ
‹aham apy āgamiṣyāmi pṛṣṭhato bhavatām iti›

"No one acts of his own free will; man is not independent. This way and that he is pulled along by fate. All accumulation ends in depletion, all rising ends in falling, in separation all union ends, and all life ends in death. Just as ripe fruit need fear one thing—to fall—so every man that is born need fear but death. Just as a stout-pillared house decays and collapses, so men collapse, succumbing to old age and death. The passing days and nights quickly deplete the life of all living things in the world, as water is dried up by the rays of the summer sun. 98.15

You should be grieving for yourself, not for anyone else. Your life is steadily dwindling, whether you stand still or move. Death walks at your side, death sits next to you. Travel as far away as you like, death will come back with you. Wrinkles beset the body, the hair turns white; a man decays with old age, and what can he do to escape it? 98.20

People are glad when the sun rises, or glad when it goes down, but they are wholly unaware that their life is slipping away. All things that breathe are delighted to see the face of each new season come, though with the turning of the seasons their life-breath is slipping away. As two pieces of wood might meet upon the open sea and, having met, drift apart after a few brief moments, so too do your wives and children, your relatives and riches meet with you and hasten away. To lose them is a certainty. 98.25

No creature that draws breath in the world can escape this course of things. There is no cure to be found for it, grieve for the dead all you will. Like a man standing by the roadside and calling out to a passing caravan, 'I too am coming, right behind you'—so did our ancestors take this

Evaṃ pūrvair gato mārgaḥ pitṛ|paitāmaho dhruvaḥ
tam āpannaḥ kathaṃ śoced yasya n' âsti vyatikramaḥ?
98.30 Vayasaḥ patamānasya srotaso v" ânivartinaḥ
ātmā sukhe niyoktavyaḥ sukhabhājaḥ prajāḥ smṛtāḥ.
Dharm'|ātmā sa śubhaiḥ kṛtsnaiḥ
kratubhiś c' āpta|dakṣiṇaiḥ
dhūta|pāpo gataḥ svargaṃ
pitā naḥ pṛthivī|patiḥ.
Bhṛtyānāṃ bharaṇāt samyak prajānāṃ paripālanāt
arth'|ādānāc ca dhārmeṇa pitā nas tridivaṃ gataḥ.
Iṣṭvā bahu|vidhair yajñair bhogāṃś c' âvāpya puṣkalān
uttamaṃ c' āyur āsādya svar|gataḥ pṛthivī|patiḥ.
Sa jīrṇaṃ mānuṣaṃ dehaṃ parityajya pitā hi naḥ
daivīm ṛddhim anuprāpto brahma|loka|vihāriṇīm.
98.35 Taṃ tu n' âivaṃ|vidhaḥ kaś cit prājñaḥ śocitum arhati
tvad|vidho yad|vidhaś c' âpi śrutavān buddhimattaraḥ.
Ete bahu|vidhāḥ śokā vilāpa rudite tathā
varjanīyā hi dhīreṇa sarv'|âvasthāsu dhīmatā.
Sa svastho bhava mā śoco yātvā c' āvasa tāṃ purīm
tathā pitrā niyukto 'si vaśinā vadatāmv vara.
Yatr' âham api ten' âiva niyuktaḥ puṇya|karmaṇā
tatr' âiv' âhaṃ kariṣyāmi pitur āryasya śāsanam.
Na mayā śāsanaṃ tasya tyaktuṃ nyāyyam ariṃ|dama
tat tvay" âpi sadā mānyaṃ sa vai bandhuḥ sa naḥ pitā.»
98.40 Evam uktvā tu virate Rāme vacanam arthavat
uvāca Bharataś citraṃ dhārmiko dhārmikaṃ vacaḥ:

sure road, our fathers and our forefathers. Why should you grieve when you cannot avoid it, when you are following that very road yourself? Since life trickles away like the wa- 98.30
ters of a stream, never to return, happiness should be one's aim—and people have found happiness, or so it is recorded. By means of every holy rite, with fitting priestly stipends, our righteous father, the lord of earth, cleansed away his sins and went to heaven. Our father conscientiously supported his dependents, protected his subjects, levied taxes in accordance with righteousness, and by virtue of these acts he has gone to the highest heaven. Having offered up the various sacrifices and enjoyed abundant pleasures, the lord of earth attained a ripe old age and went to heaven. Our father abandoned a decrepit mortal body and found the heavenly treasure that awaits one in the world of Brahma.

This man no one should mourn, no one as wise as you, as 98.35
learned and intelligent. The strong of heart will shun these different griefs, these words of lamentation, this weeping, and hold fast to wisdom in all circumstances. Compose yourself and do not grieve, most eloquent of men. Go back and take up your residence in the town, as Father of his own accord directed you to do. And the order this same man of holy deeds has given me I shall carry out, and exactly where our noble father directed. It would be wrong, tamer of foes, for me to cast aside his order. And you too must always respect it, for he was our kinsman, indeed, our father."

Such were Rama's most sensible words, and when he 98.40
finished speaking, righteous Bhárata made this righteous and wonderful reply:

«Ko hi syād īdṛśo loke yādṛśas tvam ariṃ|dama
na tvāṃ pravyathayed duḥkhaṃ prītir vā na praharṣayet?
Saṃmataś c' âsi vṛddhānāṃ tāṃś ca pṛcchasi saṃśayān
yathā mṛtas tathā jīvan yath" âsati tathā sati.
Yasy' âiṣa buddhi|lābhaḥ syāt paritapyeta kena saḥ?
sa evaṃ vyasanaṃ prāpya na viṣīditum arhati.
Amar'|ôpama|sattvas tvaṃ mah"|ātmā satya|saṃgaraḥ
sarvajñaḥ sarva|darśī ca buddhimāṃś c' âsi Rāghava.
98.45 Na tvām evaṃ guṇair yuktaṃ prabhav'|âbhava|kovidam
aviṣahyatamaṃ duḥkham āsādayitum arhati.

Proṣite mayi yat pāpaṃ mātrā mat|kāraṇāt kṛtam
kṣudrayā tad aniṣṭaṃ me. prasīdatu bhavān mama!
Dharma|bandhena baddho 'smi ten' êmāṃ n' êha mātaram
hanmi tīvreṇa daṇḍena Daṇḍ'|ârhāṃ pāpa|kāriṇīm.
Kathaṃ Daśarathāj jātaḥ śuddh'|âbhijana|karmaṇaḥ
jānan dharmam adharmiṣṭhaṃ kuryāṃ karma jugupsitam?
Guruḥ kriyāvān vṛddhaś ca rājā pretaḥ pit" êti ca
tātaṃ na parigarheyaṃ daivataṃ c' êti saṃsadi.
98.50 Ko hi dharm'|ârthayor hīnam īdṛśaṃ karma kilbiṣam
striyāḥ priya|cikīrṣuḥ san kuryād dharmajña dharmavit?
‹anta|kāle hi bhūtāni muhyant' îti› purā|śrutiḥ
rājñ" âivaṃ kurvatā loke pratyakṣā sā śrutiḥ kṛtā.

"Where in this wide world is your like to be found, tamer of foes, a man whom sorrow does not pain, and joy does not delight? You are esteemed by the elders, you have questioned them about your doubts and gained these insights about the living and the dead, and how alike they are in their existing and not existing both. What is there that could distress you? Such a man does not despair when calamity befalls him. Your courage is like that of a deathless god; you are a great man true to your word. You are all-knowing and all-seeing and a man of wisdom, Rághava. In possession of 98.45
such virtues and sage in matters of birth and death, you would not be affected by sorrow, however insufferable.

When I was absent, my mother, that wretched woman, did an evil thing on my account, which I never sought. Please forgive me! I am bound by the bond of righteousness, and only because of that do I not inflict the harshest punishment now on my mother and kill her, as she deserves, for the evil she has done. How could I, a son born of Dasha·ratha—that man of honorable family and honorable deeds—knowing the meaning of righteousness, do a deed so abominable, so unrighteous? I would not reproach our father before the assembly; he was a god to us, a performer of sacred rites, our *guru*, elder, king and father, now departed. But still, my righteous brother, what man know- 98.50
ing the meaning of righteousness would do so sinful a deed, contrary to all that is right and good, just to please a woman? There is an ancient saying: 'Creatures go mad when their end is near.' In acting as he did, the king has illustrated this saying for all the world.

Sādhv artham abhisaṃdhāya krodhān mohāc ca sāhasāt
tātasya yad atikrāntaṃ pratyāharatu tad bhavān.
Pitur hi samatikrāntaṃ putro yaḥ sādhu manyate
tad apatyaṃ mataṃ loke viparītam ato 'nyathā.
Tad apatyaṃ bhavān astu mā bhavān duṣkṛtaṃ pituḥ
abhipattā kṛtaṃ karma loke dhīra|vigarhitam.
98.55 Kaikeyīṃ māṃ ca tātaṃ ca suhṛdo bāndhavāṃś ca naḥ
paura|jānapadān sarvāṃs trātu sarvam idaṃ bhavān.
Kva c' âraṇyaṃ kva ca kṣātraṃ kva jaṭāḥ kva ca pālanam
īdṛśaṃ vyāhataṃ karma na bhavān kartum arhati.
Atha kleśajam eva tvaṃ dharmaṃ caritum icchasi
dharmeṇa caturo varṇān pālayan kleśam āpnuhi.
Caturṇām āśramāṇāṃ hi gārhasthyaṃ śreṣṭham āśramam
āhur dharmajña dharmajñās taṃ kathaṃ tyaktum arhasi?
Śrutena bālaḥ sthānena janmanā bhavato hy aham
sa kathaṃ pālayiṣyāmi bhūmiṃ bhavati tiṣṭhati?
98.60 Hīna|buddhi|guṇo bālo hīnaḥ sthānena c' âpy aham
bhavatā ca vinā bhūto na vartayitum utsahe.
Idaṃ nikhilam a|vyagraṃ pitryaṃ rājyam a|kaṇṭakam
anuśādhi sva|dharmeṇa dharmajña saha bāndhavaiḥ.
Ih' âiva tv âbhiṣiñcantu dharmajña saha bāndhavaiḥ
ṛtvijaḥ sa|Vasiṣṭhāś ca mantravan mantra|kovidāḥ.
Abhiṣiktas tvam asmābhir Ayodhyāṃ pālane vraja
vijitya tarasā lokān marudbhir iva vāsavaḥ.

Mindful of what is correct, you must redress the transgression Father committed out of anger, delusion and recklessness. Only the offspring who corrects his father's transgressions does the world consider a son—and the very opposite if he does otherwise. Be such a son, do not endorse the evil deed Father did, censured by every man of wisdom in the world.

Save Kaikéyi, Father and me, save your friends and our 98.55
kinsmen, all the people of the city and provinces, this whole world. How incongruous they are, this wilderness and the *kshátriya* order, this matted hair and the government of men. You must not do so perverse a deed. Or, if it is your wish to follow the way of righteousness that demands physical exhaustion, then endure the exhaustion of righteously governing the four social orders. Those who understand righteousness—and you yourself understand it—say that of the four stages of life the foremost is that of householder. How can you renounce it?

I am a child measured against you, both in learning and rank of birth. How should I govern the land when you are on
hand to do it? I am a child, inferior in both virtue and intel- 98.60
ligence, and junior in rank as well. Without you I could not carry on. In keeping with the code of righteousness appropriate for you, my righteous brother, govern the kingdom of our fathers, this whole, sovereign, unchallenged kingdom, in the company of your kinsmen. Let all the subjects in a body, and the priests under Vasíshtha's lead who are expert in Vedic recitation, consecrate you here and now to the accompaniment of the Vedic hymns. Once we have consecrated you, return and protect Ayódhya, utterly triumphant

Ṛṇāni trīṇy apākurvan: durhṛdaḥ sādhu nirdahan
suhṛdas tarpayan kāmais tvam ev' âtr' ânuśādhi mām.
98.65 Ady' ārya muditāḥ santu suhṛdas te 'bhiṣecane
adya bhītāḥ pālayantāṃ durhṛdas te diśo daśa.
Ākrośaṃ mama mātuś ca pramṛjya puruṣa|ṛṣabha
adya tatra|bhavantaṃ ca pitaraṃ rakṣa kilbiṣāt.
Śirasā tv âbhiyāce 'haṃ kuruṣva karuṇāṃ mayi
bāndhaveṣu ca sarveṣu bhūteṣv iva mah"|īśvaraḥ.
Atha vā pṛṣṭhataḥ kṛtvā vanam eva bhavān itaḥ
gamiṣyati gamiṣyāmi bhavatā sārdham apy aham.»
Tath" âpi Rāmo Bharatena tāmyata
prasādyamānaḥ śirasā mahī|patiḥ
na c' âiva cakre gamanāya sattvavān
matiṃ pitus tad|vacane pratiṣṭhitaḥ.
98.70 Tad adbhutaṃ sthairyam avekṣya Rāghave
samaṃ jano harṣam avāpa duḥkhitaḥ:
«na yāty Ayodhyām iti» duḥkhito 'bhavat
sthira|pratijñatvam avekṣya harṣitaḥ.
Tam ṛtvijo naigama|yūtha|vallabhās
tathā visaṃjñ'|âśru|kalāś ca mātaraḥ
tathā bruvāṇaṃ Bharataṃ pratuṣṭuvuḥ
praṇamya Rāmaṃ ca yayācire saha.

99.1 PUNAR EVAṂ BRUVĀṆAṂ tu Bharataṃ Lakṣmaṇ'|âgrajaḥ
pratyuvaca tataḥ śrīmāñ jñāti|madhye 'tisat|kṛtaḥ:

over all peoples, like Vásava with his Maruts. Discharge the three debts: completely eliminate your enemies, fulfill your friends' every desire, and give me guidance, as you alone can.

My brother, let your friends now find delight in your consecration, let your enemies now take fright and flee in the ten directions. Bull among men, rid us now of this infamy, me and my mother, and guard our revered father from sin. I implore you with my head bowed low. Take pity on me, on all your kinsmen, as the Great Lord takes pity on creatures. But if you only turn your back and go off into the forest, I will go with you as well." 98.65

But for all that Bhárata wearied himself begging Rama's grace with head bowed low, the courageous lord of earth was resolved not to return, but to hold firmly to what his father had bidden him. The people observed Rághava's wonderful determination, and they felt joy and sorrow both at once: they were sorrowful he would not return to Ayódhya and yet rejoiced to observe how determined he was to keep his promise. The priests, the merchants and the commanders of the troops—his mothers, too, stunned though they were and choked with sobs—commended what Bhárata said, and they bowed low before Rama and began to implore him all together. 98.70

When Bhárata had finished speaking, Lákshmana's majestic eldest brother, the most honored among his kinsmen, replied to him once more: 99.1

«Upapannam idaṃ vākyaṃ yat tvam evam abhāṣathāḥ
jātaḥ putro Daśarathāt Kaikeyyāṃ rāja|sattamāt.
Purā bhrātaḥ pitā naḥ sa mātaraṃ te samudvahan
mātāmahe samāśrauṣīd rājya|śulkam anuttamam.
Dev'|âsure ca saṃgrāme jananyai tava pārthivaḥ
saṃprahṛṣṭo dadau rājā varam ārādhitaḥ prabhuḥ.
Tataḥ sā saṃpratiśrāvya tava mātā yaśasvinī
ayācata nara|śreṣṭhaṃ dvau varau vara|varṇinī:
Tava rājyaṃ nara|vyāghra mama pravrājanaṃ tathā.
tac ca rājā tathā tasyai niyuktaḥ pradadau varam.

Tena pitr" âham apy atra niyuktaḥ puruṣa|ṛṣabha
catur|daśa vane vāsaṃ varṣāṇi varadānikam.
So 'haṃ vanam idaṃ prāpto nirjanaṃ Lakṣmaṇ'|ânvitaḥ
Sītayā c' âpratidvandvaḥ satya|vāde sthitaḥ pituḥ.
Bhavān api tath" êty eva pitaraṃ satya|vādinam
kartum arhati rāj'|êndraṃ kṣipram ev' âbhiṣecanāt.
Ṛṇān mocaya rājānaṃ mat|kṛte Bharata prabhum
pitaraṃ trāhi dharmajña mātaraṃ c' âbhinandaya.
Śrūyate hi purā tāta śrutir gītā yaśasvinī
gayena yajamānena gayeṣv eva pitṝn prati:
‹puṃ nāmnā narakād yasmāt pitaraṃ trāyate sutaḥ
tasmāt putra iti proktaḥ pitṝn yat pāti vā sutaḥ.
Eṣṭavyā bahavaḥ putrā guṇavanto bahu|śrutāḥ
teṣāṃ vai samavetānām api kaś cid Gayāṃ vrajet.›

"How fitting are the words you have spoken, like a true son of Kaikéyi and Dasha·ratha, the best of kings. Long ago, dear brother, when our father was about to marry your mother, he made a bride-price pledge to your grandfather—the ultimate price, the kingship. Later, at the battle of the gods and *ásuras*, the lordly king of the land, pleased and delighted with your mother, granted her a boon. Your glorious fair-skinned mother then bound the best of men to his oath and demanded these two boons of him: the kingship for you, tiger among men, and my banishment. And under this constraint the king granted her the boon. 99.5

And that is why, bull among men, father constrained me to do this, to live in the forest fourteen years, in accordance with the granting of the boon. And I for my part have come here, to the lonely forest, with Lákshmana and Sita, and I will brook no opposition to my safeguarding Father's truthfulness. In just the same way you must likewise ensure, by your immediate consecration, that the truth of the lord of kings, our father, be preserved. Free the lordly king from 99.10 his debt, for my sake, righteous Bhárata. Save your father and give your mother cause to rejoice. They recite a verse sung long ago, dear brother, by glorious Gaya when he was offering sacrifice to his ancestors in the land of Gaya: 'Because a son rescues his father from the hell named Put, he is called *putra*; or because he protects his ancestors. One should strive to have many virtuous and learned sons, for among such a host perhaps one might be found who will make the journey to Gaya.'

Evaṃ rāja|ṛṣayaḥ sarve pratītā rāja|nandana
tasmāt trāhi nara|śreṣṭha pitaraṃ narakāt prabho.
99.15 Ayodhyāṃ gaccha Bharata prakṛtīr anurañjaya
Śatrughna|sahito vīra saha sarvair dvijātibhiḥ.
Pravekṣye Daṇḍak'|âraṇyam aham apy avilambayan
ābhyāṃ tu sahito rājan Vaidehyā Lakṣmaṇena ca.
Tvaṃ rājā bhava Bharata svayaṃ narāṇāṃ
vanyānām aham api rājarāṇ mṛgāṇām
gaccha tvaṃ pura|varam adya saṃprahṛṣṭaḥ
saṃhṛṣṭas tv aham api Daṇḍakān pravekṣye.
Chāyāṃ te dinakara|bhāḥ prabādhamānaṃ
varṣatraṃ Bharata karotu mūrdhni śītām
eteṣām aham api kānana|drumāṇāṃ
chāyāṃ tām atiśayinīṃ sukhaṃ śrayiṣye.
Śatrughnaḥ kuśala|matis tu te sahāyaḥ
Saumitrir mama viditaḥ pradhāna|mitram
catvāras tanaya|varā vayaṃ nar'|êndraṃ
satyasthaṃ Bharata carāma mā viṣādam.»

100.1 Āśvāsayantaṃ Bharataṃ Jābālir brāhmaṇ'|ôttamaḥ
uvāca Rāmaṃ dharmajñaṃ dharm'|âpetam idaṃ vacaḥ:
«Sādhu Rāghava mā bhūt te buddhir evaṃ nirarthakā
prākṛtasya narasy' êva ārya|buddhes tapasvinaḥ.
Kaḥ kasya puruṣo bandhuḥ kim āpyaṃ kasya kena cit?
yad eko jāyate jantur eka eva vinaśyati.
Tasmān ‹mātā pitā c' êti› Rāma sajjeta yo naraḥ
unmatta iva sa jñeyo n' âsti kācidd hi kasya cit.
100.5 Yathā grām'|ântaraṃ gacchan naraḥ kaś cit kva cid vaset

All royal seers have concurred in this, delight of the king. Save your father, then, from hell, my lordly brother, best of men. Bhárata, my mighty brother, go back to Ayódhya with 99.15
Shatrúghna and all the twice-born men, and win the loyalty of your subjects. I will enter Dándaka wilderness without delay, your majesty, and only these two shall join me, Vaidéhi and Lákshmana. It is you, Bhárata, who must become the king of men. As for me, I shall become sovereign king of the beasts of the wild. Go now in delight, to the best of cities, and in delight I too shall go off to the Dándakas. Let the royal parasol cast its cool shade over your head, blocking out the rays of the sun, bringer of day. I shall have shade as well to retreat to for comfort, the deeper shade of these woodland trees. Quick-witted Shatrúghna will be your companion and trustworthy Saumítri my chief ally. Let all four of us, his principal sons, preserve the truth of the lord of men. Do not despair."

As RIGHTEOUS RAMA was consoling Bhárata, a prominent 100.1
brahman named Jabáli addressed him in words at variance with righteousness:

"Come now, Rághava, you must not entertain such nonsensical ideas like the commonest of men, and you a noble-minded man in distress. What man is kin to anyone, what profit has anyone in anyone else? A person is born alone, and all alone he must die. And thus, Rama, the man who feels attachment thinking, 'This is my mother, this my father,' should be regarded as a madman, for in truth no one belongs to anyone. A man travelling from village to vil- 100.5
lage will spend the night somewhere and next day leave the

utsṛjya ca tam āvāsaṃ pratiṣṭheṭ' âpare 'hani.
Evam eva manuṣyāṇāṃ pitā mātā gṛhaṃ vasu
āvāsa|mātraṃ Kākutstha sajjante n' âtra sajjanāḥ.

Pitryaṃ rājyaṃ samutsṛjya sa n' ârhati nar'|ôttama
āsthātuṃ kāpathaṃ duḥkhaṃ viṣamaṃ bahu|kaṇṭakam.
Samṛddhāyām Ayodhyāyām ātmānam abhiṣecaya
eka|veṇī|dharā hi tvāṃ nagarī saṃpratīkṣate.

Rāja|bhogān anubhavan mah"|ârhān pārthiv'|ātmaja
vihara tvam Ayodhyāyāṃ yathā Śakras triviṣṭape.
100.10 Na te kaś cid Daśarathas tvaṃ ca tasya na kaś cana
anyo rājā tvam anyaś ca tasmāt kuru yad ucyate.
Gataḥ sa nṛ|patis tatra gantavyaṃ yatra tena vai
pravṛttir eṣā martyānāṃ tvaṃ tu mithyā vihanyase.
Artha|dharma|parā ye ye tāṃs tāñ śocāmi n' êtarān
te hi duḥkham iha prāpya vināśaṃ pretya bhejire.

‹aṣṭakā pitṛ|daivatyam ity› ayaṃ prasṛto janaḥ
annasy' ôpadravaṃ paśya mṛto hi kim aśiṣyati?
Yadi bhuktam ih' ânyena deham anyasya gacchati
dadyāt pravasataḥ śrāddhaṃ na tat pathy aśanaṃ bhavet.
100.15 Dāna|saṃvananā hy ete granthā medhāvibhiḥ kṛtāḥ
‹yajasva dehi dīkṣasva tapas tapyasva saṃtyaja.›

place where he stopped and continue on—in the same way, Kakútstha, his father and mother, his home and wealth are mere stopping places for a man. The wise feel no attachment to them.

You must not, best of men, abdicate the kingship of your fathers and embark upon this unwise course, painful, rocky and full of thorns. Consecrate yourself in prosperous Ayódhya; the city is waiting for you, wearing her single braid of hair.

Indulge in priceless royal pleasures and enjoy yourself in Ayódhya, prince, like Shakra in his heaven. Dasha·ratha was nobody to you, and you were nobody to him. The king was one person, you another. So do as I am urging. The king has gone where he had to go; such is the course all mortals follow. You are merely deluding yourself. The men I grieve for, and I grieve for no one else, are all who place 'righteousness' above what brings them profit. They find only sorrow in this world, and at death their lot is annihilation just the same.

People here busy themselves because 'It is the Eighth Day, the rite for the ancestors.' But just look at the waste of food—what really is a dead man going to eat? And if something one person eats here could fill the belly of someone else, one could simply offer *shraddha* for a traveler, and he would need no provisions for the road. It was only as a charm to secure themselves donations that cunning men composed those books that tell us, 'Sacrifice, give alms, sanctify yourself, practice asceticism, renounce.'

Sa n' âsti param ity eva kuru buddhiṃ mahā|mate
pratyakṣaṃ yat tad ātiṣṭha parokṣaṃ pṛṣṭhataḥ kuru.
Satāṃ buddhiṃ puraskṛtya sarva|loka|nidarśinīm
rājyaṃ tvaṃ pratigṛhṇīṣva Bharatena prasāditaḥ.»

101.1 JĀBĀLES TU VACAḤ śrutvā Rāmaḥ saty'|ātmanāṃ varaḥ
uvāca parayā yuktyā sva|buddhyā c' âvipannayā:
«Bhavān me priya|kām'|ârthaṃ vacanaṃ yad ih' ôktavān
akāryaṃ kārya|saṃkāśam apathyaṃ pathya|saṃmitam.
Nirmaryādas tu puruṣaḥ pāp'|ācāra|samanvitaḥ
mānaṃ na labhate satsu bhinna|cāritra|darśanaḥ.
Kulīnam a|kulīnaṃ vā vīraṃ puruṣa|māninam
cāritram eva vyākhyāti śuciṃ vā yadi v" âśucim.
101.5 An|āryas tv ārya|saṃkāśaḥ śaucādd hīnas tath" âśuciḥ
lakṣaṇyavad a|lakṣaṇyo duḥśīlaḥ śīlavān iva.
Adharmaṃ dharma|veṣeṇa yadīmaṃ loka|saṃkaram
abhipatsye śubhaṃ hitvā kriyā|vidhi|vivarjitam.
Kaś cetayānaḥ puruṣaḥ kāry'|âkārya|vicakṣaṇaḥ
bahu maṃsyati māṃ loke durvṛttaṃ loka|dūṣaṇam?
Kasya yāsyāmy ahaṃ vṛttaṃ kena vā svargam āpnuyām
anayā vartamāno 'haṃ vṛttyā hīna|pratijñayā?
Kāma|vṛttas tv ayaṃ lokaḥ kṛtsnaḥ samupavartate
yad|vṛttāḥ santi rājānas tad|vṛttāḥ santi hi prajāḥ.

Accept the idea once and for all, high-minded prince, that there exists no world to come. Address yourself to what can be perceived and turn your back on what cannot. Give precedence to these ideas of the wise, with which the whole world concurs. Be appeased by Bhárata and accept the kingship."

101.1 Upon hearing Jabáli's words, Rama, the most truthful of men, replied with sound argument, his own convictions quite unshaken:

"What you have said in the hope of pleasing me is wrong with only a semblance of right; it is harm that simulates help. A person wins no esteem among the wise when his conduct belies his tenets, and he acts in evil ways, recognizing no bounds. It is conduct alone that proclaims whether a man is highborn or base, honest or dishonest, brave or merely a braggart. It would be ignobility with a semblance 101.5 of nobility, dishonesty with an outward show of honesty, dishonor masquerading as honor, indecency disguised as decency, were I to reject the good and accept such unrighteousness. For it merely wears the cloak of righteousness; it would throw the world into confusion, and is utterly in conflict with duty and precept.

What sensible man anywhere in the world, aware of what is right and wrong, would hold me in high esteem—a man of evil acts, a corrupter of the world? To whose actions should I be conforming, and how then should I reach heaven, were I to adopt this practice and break my promise? Besides, the entire world would follow suit in acting as it pleases,

101.10 Satyam ev' ānṛśaṃsyaṃ ca rāja|vṛttaṃ sanātanam
tasmāt saty'|ātmakaṃ rājyaṃ satye lokaḥ pratiṣṭhitaḥ.
Ṛṣayaś c' âiva devāś ca satyam eva hi menire
satya|vādī hi loke 'smin paramaṃ gacchati kṣayam.
Udvijante yathā sarpān narād anṛta|vādinaḥ
dharmaḥ satyaṃ paro loke mūlaṃ svargasya c' ôcyate.
Satyam ev' ēśvaro loke satyaṃ padmāḥ samāśritā
satya|mūlāni sarvāṇi satyān n' âsti paraṃ padam.

Dattam iṣṭaṃ hutaṃ c' âiva taptāni ca tapāṃsi ca
vedāḥ satya|pratiṣṭhānās tasmāt satya|paro bhavet.
101.15 Ekaḥ pālayate lokam ekaḥ pālayate kulam
majjaty eko hi niraya ekaḥ svarge mahīyate.
So 'haṃ pitur nideśaṃ tu kim|arthaṃ n' ânupālaye?
satya|pratiśravaḥ satyaṃ satyena samayī|kṛtaḥ.
N' âiva lobhān na mohād vā na c' âjñānāt tamo|'nvitaḥ
setuṃ satyasya bhetsyāmi guroḥ satya|pratiśravaḥ.
A|satya|saṃdhasya sataś calasy' âsthira|cetasaḥ
n' âiva devā na pitaraḥ pratīcchant' îti naḥ śrutam.
Pratyagātmam imaṃ dharmaṃ
satyaṃ paśyāmy ahaṃ svayam
bhāraḥ sat|puruṣ'|ācīrṇas
tad artham abhinandyate.

for subjects will behave just like their king. The actions of a king must always be truthful and benevolent. The kingdom will thereby be true, the world firmly established on truth. It is truth and truth alone that both gods and seers hold in esteem, for the man who tells the truth in this world will attain the highest abode. As from a serpent do people recoil from a man who speaks falsely. Truth, it is said, is the ultimate form of righteousness in this world, and the very root of heaven. Truth is the lord of this world, the goddess of the lotus resides in truth, all things are rooted in truth, there is no higher goal than truth. 101.10

The giving of alms, sacrifices, the offering of oblations, the practice of asceticism, and the Vedas themselves are based on truth, and so it is truth that must be one's highest aim. One man protects the world, one protects his House, one is exalted in heaven, and one sinks down to hell. As for me, why should I not truthfully follow my father's command? I have always been true to my word, and I have pledged upon my truth. Not out of greed or delusion or ignorance would I blindly breach the dam of truth. I will remain true to my promise to my *guru*. Neither the gods nor the ancestors, we have heard, accept offerings from a man whose covenant is false, from an inconstant and irresolute man. This personal code of righteousness I know myself to be the true one. Wise men have always borne the burden it imposes, and I gladly accept it. 101.15

Kṣātraṃ dharmam ahaṃ tyakṣye
hy a|dharmaṃ dharma|saṃhitam
kṣudrair nṛśaṃsair lubdhaiś ca
sevitaṃ pāpa|karmabhiḥ.
Kāyena kurute pāpaṃ manasā saṃpradhārya ca
anṛtaṃ jihvayā c' âha - tri|vidhaṃ karma pātakam.
Bhūmiḥ kīrtir yaśo lakṣmīḥ puruṣaṃ prārthayanti hi
satyasthaṃ c' ânubadhnanti satyam eva bhajeta tat.
Śreṣṭhaṃ hy an|āryam eva syād
yad bhavān avadhārya mām
āha yuktikarair vākyair
‹idaṃ bhadraṃ kuruṣva› ha.
Kathaṃ hy ahaṃ pratijñāya vana|vāsam imaṃ guroḥ
Bharatasya kariṣyāmi vaco hitvā guror vacaḥ?
Sthirā mayā pratijñātā pratijñā guru|saṃnidhau
prahṛṣṭa|mānasā devī Kaikeyī c' âbhavat tadā.
Vana|vāsaṃ vasann evaṃ śucir niyata|bhojanaḥ
mūlaiḥ puṣpaiḥ phalaiḥ puṇyaiḥ pitṝn devāṃś ca tarpayan.
Saṃtuṣṭa|pañca|vargo 'haṃ loka|yātrāṃ pravartaye
akuhaḥ śraddadhānaḥ san kāry'|âkārya|vicakṣaṇaḥ.
Karma|bhūmim imāṃ prāpya
kartavyaṃ karma yac chubham
Agnir Vāyuś ca Somaś ca
karmaṇāṃ phala|bhāginaḥ.
Śataṃ kratūnām āhṛtya devarāṭ tridivaṃ gataḥ
tapāṃsy ugrāṇi c' āsthāya divaṃ yātā maha|ṛṣayaḥ
Satyaṃ ca dharmaṃ ca parākramaṃ ca
bhūt'|ânukampāṃ priya|vāditāṃ ca
dvijāti|dev'|âtithi|pūjanaṃ ca
panthānam āhus tridivasya santaḥ.

I reject the *kshátriya*'s code, where unrighteousness and 101.20
righteousness go hand in hand, a code that only debased, vicious, covetous and evil men observe. And sinful action is of three sorts: One can have evil thoughts, or do an evil deed, or tell a lie. Land, fame, glory and wealth seek out the man who holds to truth and ever attend on him. Let a man then devote himself to truth alone.

What you consider the best course is in fact ignoble; the statements you make urging me to 'do what is good for me' are mere sophistry. I have promised my *guru* to live in the forest. How then can I do as Bhárata bids, and defy the bidding of my *guru*? I made a promise in the presence of 101.25
my *guru*—it brought delight to the heart of Queen Kaikéyi—and that promise shall not be broken. I will thus live a life of purity in the forest, restricting my food to holy things, roots, fruit and flowers, and gods and ancestors. My five senses will have contentment enough, and I shall be maintaining the world on its course. Moreover, I myself shall remain a sincere believer, fully aware of what is right and what is wrong.

On entering this realm of action one must do good deeds. And such deeds have their rewards; Fire, Wind and the Moon have reaped them. After Indra brought a hundred rites to completion he became king of the gods in the highest heaven. After performing awesome feats of asceticism the great seers reached heaven.

Truthfulness, righteousness and strenuous effort, com- 101.30
passion for creatures and kindly words, reverence for *brahman*s, gods and guests is the path, say the wise, to the highest heaven. Those men who are earnest in righteousness and keep company with the wise, who are supremely generous,

Dharme ratāḥ satpuruṣaiḥ sametās
tejasvino dāna|guṇa|pradhānāḥ
a|hiṃsakā vīta|malāś ca loke
bhavanti pūjyā munayaḥ pradhānāḥ.»

102.1 KRUDDHAM ĀJÑĀYA RĀMA tu Vasiṣṭhaḥ pratyuvāca ha:
«Jābālir api jānīte lokasy' âsya gat'|āgatim
nivartayitu kāmas tu tvām etad vākyam abravīt.
Imāṃ loka|samutpattiṃ loka|nātha nibodha me
sarvaṃ salilam ev' āsīt pṛthivī yatra nirmitā
tataḥ samabhavad Brahmā svayambhūr daivataiḥ saha.
Sa varāhas tato bhūtvā projjahāra vasuṃdharām
asṛjac ca jagat sarvaṃ saha putraiḥ kṛt'|ātmabhiḥ.
Ākāśa|prabhavo Brahmā śāśvato nitya avyayaḥ
tasmān Marīciḥ saṃjajñe Marīceḥ Kaśyapaḥ sutaḥ.
102.5 Vivasvān Kaśyapāj jajñe Manur Vaivasvataḥ smṛtaḥ
sa tu Prajāpatiḥ pūrvam Ikṣvākus tu manoḥ sutaḥ.
Yasy' êyaṃ prathamaṃ dattā samṛddhā Manunā mahī
tam Ikṣvākum Ayodhyāyāṃ rājānaṃ viddhi pūrvakam.
Ikṣvākos tu sutaḥ śrīmān Kukṣir ev' êti viśrutaḥ
Kukṣer ath' ātmajo vīro Vikukṣir udapadyata.
Vikukṣes tu mahā|tejā Bāṇaḥ putraḥ pratāpavān
Bāṇasya tu mahā|bāhur Anaraṇyo mahā|yaśāḥ.
N' ânāvṛṣṭir babhūv' âsmin na durbhikṣaṃ satāṃ vare
Anaraṇye mahā|rāje taskaro v" âpi kaś cana.
102.10 Anaraṇyān mahā|bāhuḥ Pṛthū rājā babhūva ha
tasmāt Pṛthor mahā|rājas Triśaṅkur udapadyata

nonviolent and free from taint, those supreme and mighty sages are the ones truly worthy of reverence in this world."

VASÍSHTHA, PERCEIVING that Rama was angry, addressed 102.1
him: "Jabáli likewise understands the true course of this world. He only said these things in his desire to dissuade you. I want you now, master of the world, to learn from me the origin of this world. Everything was once just water, and within this water the earth was fashioned. The Self-existent Brahma then came into existence with the gods. He then became a boar, raised up the treasure-laden earth, and created the whole moving world with the help of his accomplished sons. Brahma the everlasting, the eternal and imperishable, arose from space. He begot Maríchi, and Maríchi a son named Káshyapa. Káshyapa begot Vivasván, the 102.5
Sun. Manu is recorded as the son of Vivasván—he was the first lord of creatures—and the son of Manu was Ikshváku.

It was on him that Manu originally bestowed this prosperous land, and thus know that Ikshváku was the first king of Ayódhya.

The son of Ikshváku, we have heard, was majestic Kukshi, and Kukshi was the father of the heroic Vikúkshi. The son of Vikúkshi was the mighty, powerful Bana, and Bana's son, the great-armed, glorious Anaránya. When Anaránya, the best of men, was king, there was no drought, no famine and not a single thief in the land. Anaránya had a 102.10
great-armed son, King Prithu. Prithu was the father of the great king Tri·shanku, that heroic man who by virtue of his truthfulness went to heaven with his body. Tri·shanku had

sa satya|vacanād vīraḥ sa|śarīro divaṃ gataḥ.
Triśaṅkor abhavat sūnur Dhundhumāro mahā|yaśāḥ
Dhundhumārān mahā|tejā Yuvanāśvo vyajāyata.

Yuvanāśva|sutaḥ śrīmān Māndhātā samapadyata
Māndhātus tu mahā|tejāḥ Susaṃdhir udapadyata.
Susaṃdher api putrau dvau Dhruva|saṃdhiḥ Prasenajit
yaśasvī Dhruva|saṃdhes tu Bharato ripu|sūdanaḥ.
Bharatāt tu mahā|bāhor Asito nāma jāyata
yasy' âite pratirājāna udapadyanta śatravaḥ:
Haihayās Tālajaṅghāś ca śūrāś ca Śaśabindavaḥ.

102.15 Tāṃs tu sarvān prativyūhya yuddhe rājā pravāsitaḥ
sa ca śailavare ramye babhūv' âbhirato muniḥ
dve c' âsya bhārye garbhiṇyau babhūvatur iti śrutiḥ.
Bhārgavaś Cyavano nāma Himavantam upāśritaḥ
tam ṛṣiṃ samupāgamya Kālindī tv abhyavādayat.
Sa tām abhyavadad vipro varepsuṃ putra|janmani
tataḥ sā gṛham āgamya devī putraṃ vyajāyata.

Sapatnyā tu garas tasyai datto garbha|jighāṃsayā
gareṇa saha ten' âiva jātaḥ sa Sagaro 'bhavat.
Sa rājā Sagaro nāma yaḥ samudram akhānayat
iṣṭvā parvaṇi vegena trāsayantam imāḥ prajāḥ.

102.20 Asamañjas tu putro 'bhūt Sagarasy' êti naḥ śrutam
jīvann eva sa pitrā tu nirastaḥ pāpa|karmakṛt.
Aṃśumān iti putro 'bhūd Asamañjasya vīryavān
Dilīpo 'ṃśumataḥ putro Dilīpasya Bhagīrathaḥ.
Bhagīrathāt Kakutsthas tu Kākutsthā yena tu smṛtāḥ
Kakutsthasya tu putro 'bhūd Raghur yena tu Rāghavaḥ.

a glorious son, Dhundhu·mara, and Dhundhu·mara begot glorious Yuvanáshva.

Yuvanáshva was the father of majestic Mandhátri, and Mandhátri the father of mighty Susándhi. Susándhi had two sons, Dhruva·sandhi and Prasénajit. Dhruva·sandhi had a son named Bhárata, a glorious crusher of foes. To great-armed Bhárata was born a son named Ásita, against whom neighboring kings rose up in enmity: the Háihayas, the Tala·janghas, the Shuras and the Shasha·bindus.

The king marshalled his troops in battle against them all, 102.15
but he was driven into exile and became a contented sage upon a lovely mountain. He had two wives, both of whom were pregnant, we have heard. A man of the Bhrigu clan named Shasha·bindu had retired to the Himalayas, and Kalíndi once approached the seer and did obeisance to him. She was eager to obtain a boon for the birth of a son, and the sage greeted her. The queen then went home and soon gave birth to a son.

Her co-wife had given her poison in order to slay the unborn child, but he was born nonetheless along with that very poison, and so they called him Ságara. This was the King Ságara who in the course of a sacrifice had the ocean dug, which even now frightens creatures when it swells under the full moon. Asamáñja, we have heard, was the son of Ságara, 102.20
but in the very prime of life he was expelled by his father for the evil deeds he had done. Heroic Amshumánt was the son of Asamáñja, Dilípa was the son of Amshumánt, and Bhagi·ratha of Dilípa. Bhagi·ratha was the father of Kakútstha, from whom you have come to be known as the Kakútstha,

Raghos tu putras tejasvī pravṛddhaḥ puruṣ'|âdakaḥ
Kalmāṣapādaḥ Saudāsa ity evaṃ prathito bhuvi.
Kalmāṣapāda|putro 'bhūc Chaṅkhaṇas tv iti viśrutaḥ
yas tu tad vīryam āsādya Saha|seno vyanīnaśat.
102.25 Śaṅkhaṇasya tu putro 'bhūc chūraḥ śrīmān Sudarśanaḥ
Sudarśanasy' Âgnivarṇa Agnivarṣasya Śīghragaḥ.
Śīghragasya Maruḥ putro Maroḥ putraḥ Praśuśrukaḥ
Praśuśrukasya putro 'bhūd Ambarīṣo mahā|dyutiḥ.
Ambarīṣasya putro 'bhūn Nahuṣaḥ satya|vikramaḥ
Nahuṣasya ca Nābhāgaḥ putraḥ parama|dhārmikaḥ.
Ajaś ca Suvrataś c' âiva Nābhāgasya sutāv ubhau
Ajasya c' âiva dharm'|ātmā rājā Daśarathaḥ sutaḥ.
Tasya jyeṣṭho 'si dāyādo Rāma ity abhiviśrutaḥ
tad gṛhāṇa svakaṃ rājyam avekṣasva jagan nṛpa.
102.30 Ikṣvākūṇāṃ hi sarveṣāṃ rājā bhavati pūrvajaḥ
pūrvajen' âvaraḥ putro jyeṣṭho rājye 'bhiṣicyate.
Sa Rāghavāṇāṃ kula|dharmam ātmanaḥ
sanātanaṃ n' âdya vihātum arhasi
prabhūta|ratnām anuśādhi medinīṃ
prabhūta|rāṣṭrāṃ pitṛvan mahā|yaśāḥ.»

103.1 Vasiṣṭhas tu tadā Rāmam uktvā rāja|purohitaḥ
abravīd dharma|saṃyuktaṃ punar ev' âparaṃ vacaḥ:

Kakútstha's son was Raghu, whence you are called the Rághavas. Raghu's mighty son was the awesome eater of men known throughout the world as Kalmásha·pada Saudása.

The son of Kalmásha·pada was called Shánkhana, and whoever came up against his might perished utterly with his army. The son of Shánkhana was heroic, majestic Sudárshana, Sudárshana's son Agni·varna, Agni·varna's son Shíghraga. Shíghraga's son was Maru, Maru's son was Prashúshruka, Prashúshruka's son the splendid Ambarísha. Ambarísha's son was valorous Náhusha, Náhusha's son the supremely righteous Nabhága. Aja and Súvrata were the two sons of Nabhága, and Aja's son was righteous King Dasha·ratha. 102.25

And you, known far and wide as Rama, are his eldest son and heir. Assume, then, the kingship that is your own and show regard for the world, your majesty. For among all the Ikshvákus the firstborn has always become the king. When the firstborn is living, it is not a younger son but only the eldest who is consecrated for kingship. This is the age-old custom of your own house, the House of the Rághavas, and you must not abandon it now. You must govern the earth with its abundant treasures and abundant vassal kingdoms, and like your father win great fame." 102.30

When Vasíshtha, the family priest of the king, had finished this speech, he once more addressed Rama in harmony with righteousness: 103.1

«Puruṣasy' êha jātasya bhavanti guravas trayaḥ:
ācāryaś c' âiva Kākutstha pitā mātā ca Rāghava.
Pitā hy enaṃ janayati puruṣaṃ puruṣa|ṛṣabha
prajñāṃ dadāti c' ācāryas tasmāt sa gurur ucyate.
Sa te 'haṃ pitur ācāryas tava c' âiva paraṃ|tapa
mama tvaṃ vacanaṃ kurvan n' âtivarteḥ satāṃ gatim.
Imā hi te pariṣadaḥ śreṇayaś ca samāgatāḥ
eṣu tāta caran dharmaṃ n' âtivarteḥ satāṃ gatim.
Vṛddhāyā dharma|śīlāyā mātur n' ârhasy avartitum
asyās tu vacanaṃ kurvan n' âtivarteḥ satāṃ gatim.
Bharatasya vacaḥ kurvan yācamānasya Rāghava
ātmānaṃ n' âtivartes tvaṃ satya|dharma|parākrama.»

Evaṃ madhuram uktas tu guruṇā Rāghavaḥ svayam
pratyuvāca samāsīnaṃ Vasiṣṭhaṃ puruṣa|ṛṣabhaḥ:
«Yan mātā|pitarau vṛttaṃ tanaye kurutaḥ sadā
na supratikaraṃ tat tu mātrā pitrā ca yat kṛtam.
Yathā|śakti pradānena snāpanāc chādanena ca
nityaṃ ca priyavādena tathā saṃvardhanena ca.
Sa hi rājā janayitā pitā Daśaratho mama
ājñātaṃ yan mayā tasya na tan mithyā bhaviṣyati.»

Evam uktas tu Rāmeṇa Bharataḥ pratyanantaram
uvāca param'|ôdāraḥ sūtaṃ parama|durmanāḥ:
«Iha me sthaṇḍile śīghraṃ kuśān āstara sārathe
āryaṃ pratyupavekṣyāmi yāvan me na prasīdati.
An|āhāro nirāloko dhana|hīno yathā dvijaḥ
śeṣye purastāc chālāyā yāvan na pratiyāsyati.»

"A man born into this world has three *guru*s, Rágha-
va Kakútstha: his teacher, his father and his mother. The
father begets the man, bull among men, but the teacher
imparts wisdom to him, and for this reason he is called *gu-*
ru. I was your father's teacher and am yours, too, slayer of
foes; in doing my bidding you will not stray from the path
of the good. Here are the men of your assembly and the 103.5
guildsmen gathered together; in practicing righteousness
on their behalf, my son, you will not stray from the path
of the good. Your mother is aged and righteous, and you
must not disobey her; in doing as she bids you will not stray
from the path of the good. If you do as Bhárata bade when
supplicating you, Rághava, you will not go astray in your
pursuit of truth and righteousness."

Addressed in this gentle fashion by his *guru*, Rághava,
bull among men, for his part replied to Vasíshtha, who sat
beside him: "The constant benefits parents confer upon
their child are not easily repaid—all that a mother and
father do, giving him things to the limit of their resources,
bathing and clothing him, always speaking kindly to him
and nurturing him, too. King Dasha·ratha was my father,
he begot me, and the promise I made to him shall not be
rendered false."

So Rama spoke, and noble Bhárata, in great distress,
addressed the charioteer who was waiting in attendance:
"Charioteer, spread some *kusha* grass on the ground for me
at once; I will fast against my brother, until he shows me his
grace. Eating nothing, seeing nothing, like a penniless *brah-*
man, I will lie before the hut until he consents to return."
He watched in distress as Sumántra remained with his eyes 103.15

Sa tu Rāmam avekṣantaṃ Sumantraṃ prekṣya durmanāḥ
kuś'|ôttaram upasthāpya bhūmāv ev' āstarat svayam.

Tam uvāca mahā|tejā Rāmo rāja|ṛṣi|sattamāḥ:
«kiṃ māṃ Bharata kurvāṇaṃ tāta pratyupavekṣyasi?
Brāhmaṇo hy eka|pārśvena narān roddhum ih' ârhati
na tu mūrdh"|âvasiktānāṃ vidhiḥ pratyupaveśane.
Uttiṣṭha nara|śārdūla hitv" âitad dāruṇaṃ vratam
puravaryām itaḥ kṣipram Ayodhyāṃ yāhi Rāghava.»
Āsīnas tv eva Bharataḥ paura|jānapadaṃ janam
uvāca sarvataḥ prekṣya: «kim āryaṃ n' ânuśāsatha?»
Te tam ūcur mah"|ātmānaṃ paura|jānapadā janāḥ:
«Kākutstham abhijānīmaḥ samyag vadati Rāghavaḥ.
Eṣo 'pi hi mahā|bhāgaḥ pitur vacasi tiṣṭhati
ata eva na śaktāḥ smo vyāvartayitum añjasā.»

Teṣām ājñāya vacanaṃ Rāmo vacanam abravīt:
«evaṃ nibodha vacanaṃ suhṛdāṃ dharma|cakṣuṣām.
Etac c' âiv' ôbhayaṃ śrutvā samyak saṃpaśya Rāghava
uttiṣṭha tvaṃ mahā|bāho māṃ ca spṛśa tath" ôdakam.»
Ath' ôtthāya jalaṃ spṛṣṭvā Bharato vākyam abravīt:
«śṛṇvantu me pariṣado mantriṇaḥ śreṇayas tathā.
Na yāce pitaraṃ rājyaṃ n' ânuśāsāmi mātaram
āryaṃ parama|dharmajñam abhijānāmi Rāghavam.
Yadi tv avaśyaṃ vastavyaṃ kartavyaṃ ca pitur vacaḥ
aham eva nivatsyāmi catur|daśa vane samāḥ.»

fixed on Rama, and then he procured a layer of *kusha* grass himself and spread it on the earth.

Mighty Rama, the best of royal seers, said to him, "What have I done, dear Bhárata, that you should fast against me? A *brahman* may have the right to coerce men by lying on his side, but there is no precept permitting those whose heads are anointed to fast against anyone. So stand up, Rághava, tiger among men, and abandon this heartless vow. You must leave at once for Ayódhya, the best of cities." But Bhárata remained seated and, looking all around at the people of the city and provinces, he cried, "Why do you not remonstrate with my brother?" And the people of the city and provinces 103.20
then said to the great prince, "We recognize that what Rághava is telling Kakútstha is correct. But then, too, this illustrious man is holding firm to what his father bade him do. That is why we are truly incapable of dissuading him."

Hearing their words, Rama said, "Listen to the words of our friends, who see with the eye of righteousness. You have heard from both sides now. Consider it well, Rághava. Stand up, my great-armed brother, touch me and sip water." Bhárata then stood up, took a sip of water, and said, "Hear me, men of the assembly, you counsellors and guildsmen, too. I 103.25
did not ask my father for the kingship; I gave my mother no instructions. But I do recognize that my noble brother Rághava is supremely wise in the ways of righteousness. Thus, if someone must live here, if father's bidding must be done, I myself will live out the fourteen years in the forest."

Dharm'|ātmā tasya tathyena bhrātur vākyena vismitaḥ
uvāca Rāmaḥ saṃprekṣya paura|jānapadaṃ janam:
«Vikrītam āhitaṃ krītaṃ yat pitrā jīvatā mama
na tal lopayituṃ śakyaṃ mayā vā Bharatena vā.
Upadhir na mayā kāryo vana|vāse jugupsitaḥ
yuktam uktaṃ ca Kaikeyyā pitrā me sukṛtaṃ kṛtam.
Jānāmi Bharataṃ kṣāntaṃ guru|sat|kāra|kāriṇam
sarvam ev' âtra kalyāṇaṃ satya|saṃdhe mah"|ātmani.
Anena dharma|śīlena vanāt pratyāgataḥ punaḥ
bhrātrā saha bhaviṣyāmi pṛthivyāḥ patir uttamaḥ.
Vṛto rājā hi Kaikeyyā mayā tad vacanaṃ kṛtam
anṛtān mocayānena pitaraṃ taṃ mahī|patim.»

Righteous Rama marvelled at his brother's forthright declaration, and glancing at the people of the city and provinces he said, "What my father in his lifetime bought or sold or pledged neither Bhárata nor I can in any way annul. I cannot allow a substitute to live in the forest; that would be repugnant to me. What Kaikéyi asked was proper; what my father did was rightly done. I know Bhárata is forbearing 103.30
and shows his *guru*s honor. All will be perfectly safe in his care, for he is a great prince and true to his word. When I return from the forest I shall rejoin my righteous brother and become supreme lord of the earth. Kaikéyi made her demand of the king, and I have done her bidding and saved my father, the lord of earth, from falsehood."

104–107
THE VICEROYALTY OF BHÁRATA

104.1 Tam apratima|tejobhyāṃ
bhrātṛbhyāṃ roma|harṣaṇam
vismitāḥ saṃgamaṃ prekṣya
samavetā maha|ṛṣayaḥ.
Antarhitās tv ṛṣi|gaṇāḥ siddhāś ca paramarṣayaḥ
tau bhrātarau mah”|ātmānau Kākutsthau praśaśaṃsire.
«Sa dhanyo yasya putrau dvau
dharmajñau dharma|vikramau
śrutvā vayaṃ hi saṃbhāṣām
ubhayoḥ spṛhayāmahe.»
Tatas tv ṛṣi|gaṇāḥ kṣipraṃ daśa|grīva|vadh’|âiṣiṇaḥ
Bharataṃ rāja|śārdūlam ity ūcuḥ saṃgatā vacaḥ.
104.5 «Kule jāta mahā|prājña mahā|vṛtta mahā|yaśaḥ
grāhyaṃ Rāmasya vākyaṃ te pitaraṃ yady avekṣase.
Sad” ânṛṇam imaṃ Rāmaṃ vayam icchāmahe pituḥ
anṛṇatvāc ca Kaikeyyāḥ svargaṃ Daśaratho gataḥ.»
Etāvad uktvā vacanaṃ gandharvāḥ sa|maha|ṛṣayaḥ
rāja|ṛṣayaś c’ âiva tathā sarve svāṃ svāṃ gatiṃ gatāḥ.
Hlāditas tena vākyena śubhena śubha|darśanaḥ
Rāmaḥ saṃhṛṣṭa|vadanas tān ṛṣīn abhyapūjayat.
Srasta|gātras tu Bharataḥ sa vācā sajjamānayā
kṛt’|âñjalir idaṃ vākyaṃ Rāghavaṃ punar abravīt:
104.10 «Rāja|dharmam anuprekṣya kula|dharm’|ânusaṃtatim
kartum arhasi Kākutstha mama mātuś ca yācanām.
Rakṣituṃ sumahad rājyam aham ekas tu n’ ôtsahe
paura|jānapadāṃś c’ âpi raktān rañjayituṃ tathā.
Jñātayaś ca hi yodhāś ca mitrāṇi suhṛdaś ca naḥ
tvām eva pratikāṅkṣante parjanyam iva karṣakāḥ.

The great seers who had assembled to watch marvelled, thrilled by the meeting of the two incomparably mighty brothers. The hosts of seers, perfected beings and supreme seers remained invisible as they sang the praises of the two brothers, the great Kakútsthas. "Fortunate the man who has such sons as these, sons who know and follow the way of righteousness. How envious we are after hearing their conversation." Then all at once the hosts of seers, eager for the destruction of ten-necked Rávana, spoke to Bhárata, tiger among kings. "You are a wise and highborn prince, a man of great rectitude and glory. If you have any regard for your father, you must agree to what Rama says. It is our wish that Rama forever keep his father free from debt. It is because Dasha·ratha was free from his debt to Kaikéyi that he has gone to heaven." Saying no more, the *gandhárva*s, great seers and royal seers all departed for their separate abodes. 104.1 104.5

Splendid Rama was gladdened by these splendid words, and his face beamed with delight as he paid homage to the seers. But Bhárata went limp in every limb. He cupped his hands in reverence and, in a breaking voice, once more addressed Rághava:

"Please, show regard for the code of kings and the traditional code of our House. Oh Kakútstha, grant what we beg of you, your mother and I. I cannot, all by myself, protect this vast kingdom. Nor can I win the loyalty of the people of the city and provinces; their loyalty is already fixed. It is for you alone our kinsmen and soldiers, our allies and friends are yearning, as farmers yearn for rain. Oh my wise brother, accept the kingship and restore its stability. You 104.10

Idaṃ rājyaṃ mahā|prājña sthāpaya pratipadya hi
śaktimān asi Kākutstha lokasya paripālane.»
Ity uktvā nyapatad bhrātuḥ pādayor Bharatas tadā
bhṛśaṃ saṃprārthayām āsa Rāmam evaṃ priyaṃ vadaḥ.
104.15 Tam aṅke bhrātaraṃ kṛtvā Rāmo vacanam abravīt
śyāmaṃ nalina|patr'|âkṣaṃ matta|haṃsa|svaraḥ svayam:
«Āgatā tvām iyaṃ buddhiḥ svajā vainayikī ca yā
bhṛśam utsahase tāta rakṣituṃ pṛthivīm api.
Amātyaiś ca suhṛdbhiś ca buddhimadbhiś ca mantribhiḥ
sarva|kāryāṇi saṃmantrya sumahānty api kāraya.
Lakṣmīś candrād apeyād vā himavān vā himaṃ tyajet
atīyāt sāgaro velāṃ na pratijñām ahaṃ pituḥ.
Kāmād vā tāta lobhād vā mātrā tubhyam idaṃ kṛtam
na tan manasi kartavyaṃ vartitavyaṃ ca mātṛvat.»
104.20 Evaṃ bruvāṇaṃ Bharataḥ Kausalyā|sutam abravīt
tejas" āditya|saṃkāśaṃ pratipac|candra|darśanam:
«Adhiroh' ārya pādābhyāṃ pāduke hema|bhūṣite
ete hi sarva|lokasya yoga|kṣemaṃ vidhāsyataḥ.»
So 'dhiruhya nara|vyāghraḥ pāduke hy avaruhya ca
prāyacchat sumahātejā Bharatāya mah"|ātmane.
Sa pāduke te Bharataḥ pratāpavān
svalaṃkṛte saṃparigṛhya dharmavit
pradakṣiṇaṃ c' âiva cakāra Rāghavaṃ

are the only one, Kakútstha, who commands the power to govern the world." So Bhárata spoke, and throwing himself at Rama's feet he continued to beseech his brother with earnest expressions of love.

Rama gathered his brother Bhárata, dark and lotus-eyed, 104.15
into his embrace, and in a voice like the call of the wild goose he said:

"You have the wisdom in your possession, innately and from your training, dear brother; you too are perfectly capable of protecting the land. Take counsel with your ministers, your friends and wise counsellors, and you shall see all matters accomplished, however great they may be. The moon's splendor might forsake it, Himálaya might lose its snow, the ocean might overstep its shore, but not I my promise to my father. Whether it was love or greed that made your mother act as she did on your behalf, dear brother, should be none of your concern. You must treat her as what she is—your mother."

So the son of Kausálya spoke, his brilliance like the sun's, 104.20
his face like the waxing moon. And Bhárata then said to him:

"Please place these gold-trimmed slippers upon your feet, my brother. They will serve to guarantee the security of all the world." The mighty tiger among men put on the slippers. Then, taking them off, he presented them to great Bhárata. The mighty and righteous Bhárata accepted the ornamented slippers, and after reverently circling Rághava he placed them atop a splendid elephant. Rama paid homage to his people in due order: to his *guru*s and counsellors, to the subjects and both his younger brothers. Then the heir

cakāra c' âiv' ôttama|nāga|mūrdhani.
Ath' ānupūrvyāt pratipūjya taṃ janaṃ:
gurūṃś ca mantri|prakṛtīs tath" ânujau
vyasarjayad Rāghava|vaṃśa|vardhanaḥ
sthitaḥ sva|dharme himavān iv' âcalaḥ.
Taṃ mātaro bāṣpa|gṛhīta|kaṇṭho
duḥkhena n' āmantrayituṃ hi śekuḥ
sa tv eva mātṝr abhivādya sarvā
rudan kuṭīṃ svāṃ praviveśa Rāmaḥ.

TATAḤ ŚIRASI KṚTVĀ tu pāduke Bharatas tadā
āruroha rathaṃ hṛṣṭaḥ Śatrughnena samanvitaḥ.
Vasiṣṭho Vāmadevaś ca Jābāliś ca dṛḍha|vrataḥ
agrataḥ prayayuḥ sarve mantriṇo mantra|pūjitāḥ.
Mandākinīṃ nadīṃ ramyāṃ prāṅ|mukhās te yayus tadā
pradakṣiṇaṃ ca kurvāṇāś Citrakūṭaṃ mahā|girim.
Paśyan dhātu|sahasrāṇi ramyāṇi vividhāni ca
prayayau tasya pārśvena sa|sainyo Bharatas tadā.
A|dūrāc Citrakūṭasya dadarśa Bharatas tadā
āśramaṃ yatra sa munir Bharadvājaḥ kṛt'|ālayaḥ.
Sa tam āśramam āgamya Bharadvājasya buddhimān
avatīrya rathāt pādau vavande kula|nandanaḥ.
Tato hṛṣṭo Bharadvājo Bharataṃ vākyam abravīt:
«api kṛtyaṃ kṛtaṃ tāta? Rāmeṇa ca samāgatam?»
Evam uktas tu Bharato Bharadvājena dhīmatā
pratyuvāca Bharadvājaṃ Bharato dharma|vatsalaḥ:
«Sa yācyamāno guruṇā mayā ca dṛḍha|vikramaḥ
Rāghavaḥ parama|prīto Vasiṣṭhaṃ vākyam abravīt:
‹pituḥ pratijñāṃ tām eva pālayiṣyāmi tattvataḥ
catur|daśa hi varṣāṇi yā pratijñā pitur mama.›

of the Rághava dynasty dismissed them, standing firmly as Mount Himálaya by his own code of righteousness. In their sorrow, his mothers could not bid him farewell, their throats were so choked with sobs, but Rama did obeisance to them all and then entered his hut, in tears. 104.25

Bhárata took the slippers and placed them upon his head. Then in delight he boarded the chariot with Shatrúghna. All the counsellors revered for their counsel—Vasíshtha, Vama·deva and strictly observant Jabáli—proceeded before them. They passed the lovely Mandákini River, heading east and keeping great Mount Chitra·kuta on their right. In the company of his army, Bhárata made his way along the mountainside, observing the thousands of lovely different minerals it held. Not far from Chitra·kuta Bhárata caught sight of the ashram where the sage Bharad·vaja made his residence. Thoughtful Bhárata, the delight of his House, approached the ashram, and alighting from the chariot he prostrated himself at Bharad·vaja's feet. 105.1 105.5

In delight Bharad·vaja asked, "Have you done what had to be done, Bhárata my son? Have you met with Rama?" So the wise Bharad·vaja spoke, and Bhárata, who cherished the ways of righteousness, replied: "Both his *guru* and I entreated the steadfast Rághava, but he was deeply displeased and made this reply to Vasíshtha: 'I will scrupulously keep my promise to my father, the fourteen years I promised to my father.' So Rághava eloquently spoke, and the wise Vasíshtha replied to him with equal eloquence, and spoke these weighty words: 'Be pleased, wise prince, to give us 105.10

Evam ukto mahā|prājño Vasiṣṭhaḥ pratyuvāca ha
vākyajño vākya|kuśalaṃ Rāghavaṃ vacanaṃ mahat:
‹ete prayaccha saṃhṛṣṭaḥ pāduke hema|bhūṣite
Ayodhyāyāṃ mahā|prājña yoga|kṣema|kare tava.›
Evam ukto Vasiṣṭhena Rāghavaḥ prāṅ|mukhaḥ sthitaḥ
pāduke hema|vikṛte mama rājyāya te dadau.
Nivṛtto 'ham anujñāto Rāmeṇa sumah"|ātmanā
Ayodhyām eva gacchāmi gṛhītvā pāduke śubhe.»
105.15 Etac chrutvā śubhaṃ vākyaṃ Bharatasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
Bharadvājaḥ śubhataraṃ munir vākyam udāharat:
«N' âitac citraṃ nara|vyāghra śīla|vṛttavatāṃ vara
yad āryaṃ tvayi tiṣṭhet tu nimne vṛṣṭim iv' ôdakam.
Amṛtaḥ sa mahā|bāhuḥ pitā Daśarathas tava
yasya tvam īdṛśaḥ putro dharm'|ātmā dharma|vatsalaḥ.»
Tam ṛṣiṃ tu mah"|ātmānam ukta|vākyaṃ kṛt'|âñjaliḥ
āmantrayitum ārebhe caraṇāv upagṛhya ca.
Tataḥ pradakṣiṇaṃ kṛtvā Bharadvājaṃ punaḥ punaḥ
Bharatas tu yayau śrīmān Ayodhyāṃ saha mantribhiḥ.
105.20 Yānaiś ca śakaṭaiś c' âiva hayaiś nāgaiś ca sā camūḥ
punar nivṛttā vistīrṇā Bharatasy' ânuyāyinī.
Tatas te Yamunāṃ divyāṃ nadīṃ tīrtv" ōrmi|mālinīm
dadṛśus tāṃ punaḥ sarve Gaṅgāṃ śiva|jalāṃ nadīm.
Tāṃ ramya|jala|saṃpūrṇāṃ saṃtīrya saha bāndhavaḥ
Śṛṅgaverapuraṃ ramyaṃ praviveśa sa|sainikaḥ.
Śṛṅgaverapurād bhūya Ayodhyāṃ saṃdadarśa ha
Bharato duḥkha|saṃtaptaḥ sārathiṃ c' êdam abravīt:
«Sārathe paśya vidhvastā Ayodhyā na prakāśate
nirākārā nirānandā dīnā pratihata|svanā.»

these gold-trimmed slippers. In your stead they will ensure the welfare and security of Ayódhya.' So Vasíshtha spoke, and Rághava stood facing eastward and bestowed on me these gold-worked slippers, in order to rule the kingdom. Great Rama gave me leave, and now I am returning. I am going back to Ayódhya, taking the splendid slippers with me."

The sage Bharad·vaja listened to the earnest words of great Bhárata, and then even more earnestly he replied: "It is not surprising, tiger among men, most upright and dutiful of men, that nobility should come to reside in you, like rainwater in the lowlands. Your great-armed father Dasha·ratha is not dead, not when he has such a son as you, a righteous son who cherishes the ways of righteousness." When the great seer finished speaking, Bhárata cupped his hands in reverence, and in preparation for bidding him farewell he clasped his feet. Again and again majestic Bhárata reverently circled Bharad·vaja, and then, with his counsellors, he set out for Ayódhya. 105.15

Spread far and wide with all its coaches, wagons, horses and elephants, the army made its way back in Bhárata's train. They all crossed the heavenly, wave-wreathed Yámuna River, and saw once more the gracious waters of the Ganges. Crossing the river brimming with lovely water, he and his kinsmen and army entered lovely Shringa·vera·pura. Beyond Shringa·vera·pura, Bhárata once more beheld Ayódhya, and he was consumed with sorrow as he said to his charioteer: "Look, charioteer, Ayódhya is darkened and in ruins. Its beauty is gone, its bliss is gone, it is desolate and silent." 105.20

106.1 SNIGDHA|GAMBHĪRA|GHOṢEṆA
syandanen' ôpayān prabhuḥ
Ayodhyāṃ Bharataḥ kṣipraṃ
praviveśa mahā|yaśāḥ.
Biḍāl'|ôlūka|caritām ālīna|nara|vāraṇām
timir'|âbhyāhatāṃ kālīm aprakāśāṃ niśām iva.
Rāhu|śatroḥ priyāṃ patnīṃ śriyā prajvalita|prabhām
graheṇ' âbhyutthiten' âikāṃ rohiṇīm iva pīḍitām.
Rāhu|śatroḥ priyāṃ patnīṃ śriyā prajvalita|prabhām
graheṇ' âbhyutthiten' âikāṃ rohiṇīm iva pīḍitām;
Alp'|ôṣṇa|kṣubdha|salilāṃ gharm'|ôttapta|vihaṃgamām
līna|mīna|jhaṣa|grāhāṃ kṛśāṃ giri|nadīm iva;
106.5 Vidhūmām iva hemābhām adhvar'|âgni|samutthitām
havir|abhyukṣitāṃ paścāc chikhāṃ vipralayaṃ gatām;
Vidhvasta|kavacāṃ rugṇa|gaja|vāji|ratha|dhvajām
hata|pravīrām āpannāṃ camūm iva mah"|āhave
Saphenāṃ sa|svanāṃ bhūtvā sāgarasya samutthitām
praśānta|mārut'|ôddhūtāṃ jal'|ōrmim iva niḥsvanām;
Tyaktāṃ yajñ'|āyudhaiḥ sarvair abhirūpaiś ca yājakaiḥ
sutyā|kāle vinirvṛtte vediṃ gata|ravām iva;
Goṣṭha|madhye sthitām ārtām acarantīṃ navaṃ tṛṇam
go|vṛṣeṇa parityaktāṃ gavāṃ paṅktīm iv' ôtsukām;
106.10 Prabhā|karālaiḥ susnigdhaiḥ prajvaladbhir iv' ôttamaiḥ
viyuktāṃ maṇibhir jātyair navāṃ mukt"|āvalīm iva;
Sahasā calitāṃ sthānān mahīṃ puṇya|kṣayād gatām
saṃhṛta|dyuti|vistārāṃ tārām iva divaś cyutām;
Puṣpa|naddhāṃ vasant'|ânte matta|bhramara|śālinīm

The coach gave out a smooth deep sound as the glorious and lordly Bhárata approached and directly entered Ayódhya. There were cats roaming everywhere, and owls circling; the people and elephants were in hiding, and the city lay shrouded in gloom. It lay dark as night itself with no light at all. 106.1

It looked like the constellation Róhini, the majestically radiant and beloved wife of the Moon, the enemy of Rahu, when that seizing eclipse encroaches and harries her left all alone; Like a wasted mountain river, its water scant, hot and turbid, the birds dazed by summer's heat, the minnows, fish and crocodiles lying hidden deep below; Like a flame that has leaped from the sacrificial fire, smokeless and golden when the oblation was poured, then abruptly snuffed out; Like an army routed in a great battle, its armaments in ruins, its horses and elephants slaughtered, its chariots and standards shattered, its heroes slain; 106.5

Like a great wave raised foaming and roaring on the open sea and then, when the wind dies down, dispersed into silence; Like an altar after the worthy sacrificers have left with all their sacrificial implements, the hour of the soma pressing has come and gone, and the din has ceased; Like a herd of cows in the middle of a pasture when their bull has left them, and they no longer graze the new grass but are anguished and wistful; Like a new pearl necklace when its precious gems have come unstrung, the most perfect, smooth, radiant, glistening gems; Like a star suddenly tottering from its place when its merit is exhausted, and falling from heaven down to earth, its expansive luster dimmed; Like a woodland vine at the end of spring, decked with 106.10

druta|dāv'|âgni|viplusṭāṃ klāntāṃ vana|latām iva.

Saṃmūḍha|nigamāṃ sarvāṃ saṃkṣipta|vipaṇ'|āpaṇām
pracchanna|śaśi|nakṣatrāṃ dyām iv' âmbu|dharair vṛtām.
Kṣīṇa|pān'|ôttamair bhinnaiḥ śarāvair abhisaṃvṛtām
hata|śauṇḍām iv' ākāśe pāna|bhūmim a|saṃskṛtām.
106.15 Vṛkṇa|bhūmi|talāṃ nimnāṃ vṛkṇa|pātraiḥ samāvṛtām
upayukt'|ôdakāṃ bhagnāṃ prapāṃ nipatitām iva.
Vipulāṃ vitatāṃ c' âiva yukta|pāśāṃ tarasvinām
bhūmau bāṇair viniṣkṛttāṃ patitāṃ jyām iv' āyudhāt.
Sahasā yuddha|śauṇḍena hay'|āroheṇa vāhitām
nikṣipta|bhāṇḍām utsṛṣṭāṃ kiśorīm iva durbalām.
Prāvṛṣi pravigāḍhāyāṃ praviṣṭasy' âbhra|maṇḍalam
pracchannāṃ nīla|jīmūtair bhāskarasya prabhām iva.

Bharatas tu rathasthaḥ sañ śrīmān Daśarath'|ātmajaḥ
vāhayantaṃ ratha|śreṣṭhaṃ sārathiṃ vākyam abravīt:
106.20 «Kiṃ nu khalv adya gambhīro mūrchito na niśamyate
yathā|puram Ayodhyāyāṃ gīta|vāditra|niḥsvanaḥ?
Vāruṇī|mada|gandhaś ca mālyaga|ndhaś ca mūrchitaḥ
dhūpit'|âgaru|gandhaś ca na pravāti samantataḥ.
Yāna|pravara|ghoṣaś ca snigdhaś ca haya|niḥsvanaḥ
pramatta|gaja|nādaś ca mahāṃś ca ratha|niḥsvanaḥ
n' êdānīṃ śrūyate puryām asyāṃ Rāme vivāsite.
Taruṇaiś cāru|veṣaiś ca narair unnata|gāmibhiḥ
saṃpatadbhir Ayodhyāyāṃ na vibhānti mahā|pathāḥ.»

flowers and swarming with drunken bees, then scorched by a racing forest fire and withered.

All the merchants were in a daze, the bazaars and shops closed up tight, and the city looked like the night sky covered with clouds, the hare-marked moon and constellations obscured; Like a rowdy tavern littered with smashed goblets, the costly drinks drained, and the patrons lying in the open, dead drunk; Like a ruined well, sunken and broken, its water used up, its pavement cracked, its buckets cracked and scattered all around; Like a bowstring, once long and taut and fitted out with loops, fallen from the bow to the ground when cut by a champion's arrows; Like a filly stripped of all her trappings and wildly whipped on by a battle-drunk rider, a weak filly, one that should still be running free; Like the radiance of the sun gone behind a bank of clouds when the driving rains come, and the blue-black clouds obscure it. 106.15

The charioteer drove the excellent chariot onward, and seated inside, Bhárata, Dasha·ratha's majestic son, addressed him:

"Why, I wonder, are the deep, pervasive sounds of singing and musical instruments not coming from Ayódhya now, as they always used to? The heady fragrance of wine, the pervading fragrance of garlands and the fragrance of aloe-wood incense are no longer carried on the breeze. The clangor of fine carriages, the rich sound of horses, the trumpeting of rutting elephants and the deafening sound of chariots are no longer to be heard in the city, now that Rama is in exile. No people are to be seen thronging together on Ayódhya's thoroughfares, neither the youngsters in their finery nor the adults with their stately step." 106.20

Evaṃ bahu|vidhaṃ jalpan viveśa vasatiṃ pituḥ
tena hīnāṃ nar'|êndreṇa siṃha|hīnāṃ guhām iva.

107.1 TATO NIKṢIPYA MĀTṚḤ sa Ayodhyāyāṃ dṛḍha|vrataḥ
Bharataḥ śoka|saṃtapto gurūn idam ath' âbravīt:
«Nandi|grāmaṃ gamiṣyāmi sarvān āmantraye 'dya vaḥ
tatra duḥkham idaṃ sarvaṃ sahiṣye Rāghavaṃ vinā.
Gataś ca hi divaṃ rājā vanasthaś ca gurur mama
Rāmaṃ pratīkṣe rājyāya sa hi rājā mahā|yaśāḥ.»
Etac chrutvā śubhaṃ vākyaṃ Bharatasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
abruvan mantriṇaḥ sarve Vasiṣṭhaś ca purohitaḥ:
107.5 «Sadṛśaṃ ślāghanīyaṃ ca yad uktaṃ Bharata tvayā
vacanaṃ bhrātṛ|vātsalyād anurūpaṃ tav' âiva tat.
Nityaṃ te bandhu|lubdhasya tiṣṭhato bhrātṛ|sauhṛde
ārya|mārgaṃ prapannasya n' ânumanyeta kaḥ pumān?»
Mantriṇāṃ vacanaṃ śrutvā yath"|âbhilaṣitaṃ priyam
abravīt sārathiṃ vākyaṃ «ratho me yujyatām iti.»

Prahṛṣṭa|vadanaḥ sarvā mātṚḥ samabhivādya saḥ
āruroha rathaṃ śrīmāñ Śatrughnena samanvitaḥ.
Āruhya tu rathaṃ śīghraṃ Śatrughna|Bharatāv ubhau
yayatuḥ parama|prītau vṛtau mantri|purohitaiḥ.
107.10 Agrato puravas tatra Vasiṣṭha|pramukhā dvijāḥ
prayayuḥ prāṅ|mukhāḥ sarve Nandi|grāmo yato 'bhavat.
Balaṃ ca tad an|āhūtaṃ gaj'|âśva|ratha|saṃkulam
prayayau Bharate yāte sarve ca pura|vāsinaḥ.

With these and many similar comments he entered his father's residence, bereft now of the lord of men like a cave without its lion.

After resettling his mothers in Ayódhya, the grief-stricken Bhárata, firm in his vows, addressed his *guru*s: "I have come to ask leave of you all; I am going to Nandi·grama. There I shall suffer through all this sorrow of being without Rághava. With the king gone to heaven and my *guru* in the forest, I shall await Rama until he assumes the kingship, for he is the glorious king." When they heard great Bhárata's heartfelt declaration, Vasíshtha the family priest and all the counsellors replied: "These are seemly and praiseworthy words you have spoken out of love for your brother, Bhárata, and they befit you. Keeping to the noble way, always zealous on your kinsmen's behalf, and steadfast in your brotherly love—whose approval could you fail to win?" On hearing the kind words of the counsellors, all that he could hope for, he bade the charioteer, "Harness my chariot." 107.1 107.5

The face of the majestic prince beamed with delight as he did obeisance to all his mothers and boarded the chariot with Shatrúghna. Once aboard, Bhárata and Shatrúghna sped off in great joy, together with their counsellors and family priest. Before them went all their *guru*s, the *brahman*s led by Vasíshtha, heading east toward Nandi·grama. And altogether unbidden, the army, a crush of elephants, horses and chariots, set off as Bhárata left, and so did all 107.10

Rathasthaḥ sa tu dharm'|ātmā Bharato bhrātṛ|vatsalaḥ
Nandi|grāmaṃ yayau tūrṇaṃ śirasy ādhāya pāduke.

Tatas tu Bharataḥ kṣipraṃ Nandi|grāmaṃ praviśya saḥ
avatīrya rathāt tūrṇaṃ gurūn idam uvāca ha:
«Etad rājyaṃ mama bhrātrā dattaṃ saṃnyāsavat svayam
yoga|kṣema|vahe c' ême pāduke hema|bhūṣite
tam imaṃ pālayiṣyāmi Rāghav'|āgamanaṃ prati.
107.15 Kṣipraṃ saṃyojayitvā tu Rāghavasya punaḥ svayam
caraṇau tau tu Rāmasya drakṣyāmi saha|pādukau.
Tato nikṣipta|bhāro 'haṃ Rāghaveṇa samāgataḥ
nivedya gurave rājyaṃ bhajiṣye guru|vṛttitām.
Rāghavāya ca saṃnyāsaṃ dattv" ême vara|pāduke
rājyaṃ c' êdam Ayodhyāṃ ca dhūta|pāpo bhavāmi ca.
Abhiṣikte tu Kākutsthe prahṛṣṭa|mudite jane
prītir mama yaśaś c' âiva bhaved rājyāc catur|guṇam.»

Evaṃ tu vilapan dīno Bharataḥ sa mahā|yaśāḥ
Nandi|grāme 'karod rājyaṃ duḥkhito mantribhiḥ saha.
107.20 Sa valkala|jaṭā|dhārī muni|veṣa|dharaḥ prabhuḥ
Nandi|grāme 'vasad vīraḥ sa|sainyo Bharatas tadā.
Rām'|āgamanam ākāṅkṣan Bharato bhrātṛ|vatsalaḥ
bhrātur vacana|kārī ca pratijñā|pāragas tadā.
Pāduke tv abhiṣicy' âtha Nandi|grāme 'vasat tadā
Bharataḥ śāsanaṃ sarvaṃ pādukābhyāṃ nyavedayat.

the inhabitants of the town. Righteous Bhárata, who cherished his brother, hurried in his chariot to Nandi·grama, still bearing the slippers upon his head.

Soon Bhárata entered Nandi·grama, and hurriedly alighting from the chariot he told his *gurus*: "My brother himself gave me the kingship, as a trust—it is these gold-trimmed slippers that will guarantee its welfare and security—and I shall guard this trust until Rághava's return. O that I might 107.15
soon see the feet of Rama Rághava placed within these slippers, tying them on once again with my own hands. When I am reunited with Rághava, I shall lay my burden down, making over the kingship to my *guru* and resuming toward him the conduct due a *guru*. When I have restored this trust to Rághava, these splendid slippers, this kingship and Ayódhya, I shall be cleansed of sin. When Kakútstha is consecrated, when the people are delighted and glad once more, the joy and glory I shall gain will be worth four times the kingship."

So glorious Bhárata lamented in his desolation, and in Nandi·grama with his counsellors he commenced his rule in sorrow. Heroic Bhárata wore bark cloth and matted hair— 107.20
the lord wore the garb of a sage—and lived in Nandi·grama with his army, longing for Rama's return, cherishing his brother, doing his brother's bidding and intent on carrying out the promise. Bhárata consecrated the slippers and lived in Nandi·grama, and before he would give any order he first apprised the slippers.

108–111
RAMA ENTERS THE FOREST

108.1 Pratiprayāte Bharate vasan Rāmas tapo|vane
lakṣayām āsa s'|ôdvegam ath' āutsukyaṃ tapasvinām.
Ye tatra Citrakūṭasya purastāt tāpas'|āśrame
Rāmam āśritya niratās tān alakṣayad utsukān.
Nayanair bhṛkuṭībhiś ca Rāmaṃ nirdiśya śaṅkitāḥ
anyonyam upajalpantaḥ śanaiś cakrur mithaḥ kathāḥ.
Teṣām autsukyam ālakṣya Rāmas tv ātmani śaṅkitaḥ
kṛt'|âñjalir uvāc' êdam ṛṣiṃ kula|patiṃ tataḥ.
108.5 «Na kaccid bhagavan kiṃ cit pūrva|vṛttam idaṃ mayi
dṛśyate vikṛtaṃ yena vikriyante tapasvinaḥ?
Pramādāc caritaṃ kaccit kiṃ cin n' âvarajasya me
Lakṣmaṇasya ṛṣibhir dṛṣṭaṃ n' ânurūpam iv' ātmanaḥ?
Kaccic chuśrūṣamāṇā vaḥ śuśrūṣaṇa|parā mayi
pramad"|âbhyucitāṃ vṛttiṃ Sītā yuktaṃ na vartate?»
Atha|ṛṣir jarayā vṛddhas tapasā ca jarāṃ gataḥ
vepamāna iv' ôvāca Rāmaṃ bhūta|daya|param:
«Kutaḥ kalyāṇa|sattvāyāḥ kalyāṇ'|âbhirates tathā
calanaṃ tāta Vaidehyās tapasviṣu viśeṣataḥ?
108.10 Tvan|nimittam idaṃ tāvat tāpasān prati vartate
rakṣobhyas tena saṃvignāḥ kathayanti mithaḥ kathāḥ.
Rāvaṇ'|âvarajaḥ kaś cit Kharo nām' êha rākṣasaḥ
utpāṭya tāpasān sarvāñ Jana|sthāna|niketanān.
Dhṛṣṭaś ca jitakāśī ca nṛśaṃsaḥ puruṣ'|âdakaḥ
avaliptaś ca pāpaś ca tvāṃ ca tāta na mṛṣyate.

As Rama lived on in the grove of asceticism after Bhárata's departure, he began to observe with a growing dismay an uneasiness among the ascetics. It was the ascetics who had earlier taken refuge with Rama and were pleased with the ashram there on Chitra·kuta whom he now observed to be so uneasy. They regarded Rama suspiciously, their brows knit in a frown, and they whispered softly to each other and held conversation among themselves. And observing their uneasiness Rama began to suspect that he himself might be at fault. Cupping his hands in reverence, he addressed the seer who was chief of their community. "Holy one, have you found my conduct changed from before? Is that why this change has come over the ascetics? Have the seers found my younger brother Lákshmana doing something unbefitting him, out of negligence? Has Sita failed to maintain properly the conduct becoming a woman, neglecting, in overscrupulous obedience to me, her obedience to you?" 108.1 108.5

The seer, a man advanced both in years and in asceticism, was trembling slightly as he replied to the compassionate Rama: "How could Vaidéhi ever err, my son, especially against ascetics, when she is so good-natured and always earnest for what is good? It is in fact on your account that the ascetics are in this state—because of the *rákshasa*s. That is why they are disquieted and hold conversation among themselves. One of Rávana's younger brothers—Khara is his name—is nearby. He is the one who uprooted all the ascetics dwelling in Jana·sthana. He is an eater of men, audacious and impudent, vicious, haughty and evil, and he cannot abide you, my son. From the moment you came to 108.10

Tvaṃ yadā prabhṛti hy asminn āśrame tāta vartase
tadā prabhṛti rakṣāṃsi viprakurvanti tāpasān.
Darśayanti hi bībhatsaiḥ krūrair bhīṣaṇakair api
nānā|rūpair virūpaiś ca rūpair asukha|darśanaiḥ.
Apraśastair aśucibhiḥ saṃprayojya ca tāpasān
pratighnanty aparān kṣipram an|āryāḥ purataḥ sthitaḥ.

Teṣu teṣv āśrama|sthāneṣv abuddham avalīya ca
ramante tāpasāṃs tatra nāśayanto 'lpa|cetasaḥ.
Apakṣipanti srug|bhāṇḍān agnīn siñcanti vāriṇā
kalaśāṃś ca pramṛdnanti havane samupasthite.
Tair durātmabhir āviṣṭān āśramān prajihāsavaḥ
gamanāy' ânyadeśasya codayanty ṛṣayo 'dya mām.
Tat purā Rāma śārīrām upahiṃsāṃ tapasviṣu
darśayati hi duṣṭās te tyakṣyāma imam āśramam.
Bahu|mūla|phalaṃ citram avidūrād ito vanam
purāṇ'|āśramam ev' âhaṃ śrayiṣye sa|gaṇaḥ punaḥ.
Kharas tvayy api c' âyuktaṃ purā tāta pravartate
sah' âsmābhir ito gaccha yadi buddhiḥ pravartate.
Sa|kalatrasya saṃdeho nityaṃ yat tasya Rāghava
samarthasy' âpi hi sato vāso duḥkha ih' âdya te.»

Ity uktavantaṃ Rāmas taṃ rāja|putras tapasvinam
na śaśāk' ôttarair vākyair avaroddhuṃ samutsukam.
Abhinandya samāpṛcchya samādhāya ca Rāghavam
sa jagām' āśramaṃ tyaktvā kulaiḥ kula|patiḥ saha.
Rāmaḥ saṃsādhya tv ṛṣi|gaṇam anugacchan sa
deśāt kasmāc cit kulapatim abhivādya' ṛṣim
samyak|prītais tair anumata upadiṣṭ'|ârthaḥ

live in this ashram, my son, the *rákshasa*s have been molesting the ascetics. They show themselves in every form of deformation, loathsome, savage and terrifying forms, a horror to behold. Enemies of all that is noble, they defile some ascetics with unspeakable impurities and strike terror into others by suddenly appearing before them.

Stealthily they prowl the ashram sites, one after another, and take a mad delight in harassing the ascetics. They scatter the ladles and the other sacrificial implements; they douse the fires with water and break the vessels when the oblations are under way. The ashrams are infested with these wicked creatures. The seers are eager to abandon them and have been urging me to go to some other region. So before these foul creatures offer physical violence to the ascetics, we will leave this ashram, Rama. Not far from here is a wonderful forest with many roots and fruit. It was our old ashram, and I will return there with my host. Before Khara does some harm to you, too, my son, you should come away from here with us, if you are of a mind to do so. For you to live here with your wife is perilous, Rághava, ever alert and powerful though you may be. It will soon bring you sorrow."

So the ascetic spoke, and his uneasiness was such that nothing Prince Rama offered in reply could hold him back. The chief of the community blessed Rághava, comforted him and asked his leave, and abandoning the ashram with his community he went away. Rama escorted the host of seers, following them out to some distance, and did obeisance to the seer, their chief. They were well pleased and, as they gave him leave, they repeated their advice. Then he returned to his own holy abode to take up his residence.

puṇyaṃ vāsāya sva|nilayam upasaṃpede.
Āśramaṃ tv ṛṣi|virahitaṃ prabhuḥ
kṣaṇam api na jahau sa Rāghavaḥ
Rāghavaṃ hi satatam anugatās
tāpasāś ca ṛṣi|carita|dhṛta|guṇāḥ.

109.1 RĀGHAVAS TV APAYĀTEṢU tapasviṣu vicintayan
na tatr' ârocayad vāsaṃ kāraṇair bahubhis tadā.
«Iha me Bharato dṛṣṭo mātaraś ca sa|nāgarāḥ
sā ca me smṛtir anveti tān nityam anuśocataḥ.
Skandhāvāra|niveśena tena tasya mah"|ātmanaḥ
haya|hasti|karīṣaiś ca upamardaḥ kṛto bhṛśam.
Tasmād anyatra gacchāma iti» saṃcintya Rāghavaḥ
prātiṣṭhata sa Vaidehyā Lakṣmaṇena ca saṃgataḥ
109.5 So 'trer āśramam āsādya taṃ vavande mahā|yaśāḥ
taṃ c' âpi bhagavān Atriḥ putravat pratyapadyata.
Svayam ātithyam ādiśya sarvam asya susat|kṛtam
Saumitriṃ ca mahā|bhāgāṃ Sītāṃ ca samasāntvayat.
Patnīṃ ca tam anuprāptāṃ vṛddhām āmantrya sat|kṛtām
sāntvayām āsa dharmajñaḥ sarva|bhūta|hite rataḥ.
Anasūyāṃ mahā|bhāgāṃ tāpasīṃ dharma|cāriṇīm
pratigṛhṇīṣva Vaidehīm abravīd ṛṣi|sattamaḥ
Rāmāya c' ācacakṣe: «tāṃ tāpasīṃ dharma|cāriṇīm
daśa varṣāṇy an|āvṛṣṭyā dagdhe loke nirantaram.
109.10 Yayā mūla|phale sṛṣṭe Jāhnavī ca pravartitā
ugreṇa tapasā yuktā niyamaiś c' âpy alaṃkṛtā.
Daśa|varṣa|sahasrāṇi yayā taptaṃ mahat tapaḥ

Lordly Rághava did not for an instant leave the ashram now that the seers had quit it, the ascetics who had always attended Rághava with the many virtues acquired from their sage conduct.

When the ascetics had departed, Rághava fell to thinking, and he found that for many reasons his dwelling place no longer pleased him. "It was here I saw Bhárata, my mothers, and the townsmen," he reflected, "and my memory lingers on them still in their constant grief. Then, too, the camps great Bhárata pitched and the dung of his elephants and horses have left things in a terrible state. We shall therefore go somewhere else." And so Rághava set forth with Vaidéhi and Lákshmana. 109.1

Making his way to the ashram of Atri, glorious Rama prostrated himself before the holy seer, and Atri received him like a son. He himself provided Rama with hospitality, lavish and honorable, and he cheered Saumítri and illustrious Sita. His aged and honored wife arrived, and the seer, wise in the ways of righteousness and earnest for the welfare of all creatures, invited her and cheered her, too. This was Anasúya, an illustrious ascetic who followed the way of righteousness, and the best of seers bade her receive Vaidéhi. And he told Rama about his ascetic wife who followed the way of righteousness: "Once when the world was utterly ravaged by drought for ten years, it was Anasúya who created roots and fruit and caused the Jáhnavi to flow, for the ascetic power she has acquired is awesome, and mortifications adorn her. She has practiced intense asceticism for ten thousand years, my son, and by her vows all obstacles have 109.5

Anasūyā|vratais tāta pratyūhāś ca nibarhitāḥ.
Deva|kārya|nimittaṃ ca yayā saṃtvaramāṇayā
daśa|rātraṃ kṛtvā rātriḥ s" êyaṃ māt" êva te 'nagha.
Tām imāṃ sarva|bhūtānāṃ namaskāryāṃ yaśasvinīm
abhigacchatu Vaidehī vṛddhām a|krodhanāṃ sadā.»

Evaṃ bruvāṇaṃ tam ṛṣiṃ tath" êty uktvā sa Rāghavaḥ
Sītām uvāca dharmajñām idaṃ vacanam uttamam:
109.15 «Rāja|putri śrutaṃ tv etan muner asya samīritam
śreyo 'rtham ātmanaḥ śīghram abhigaccha tapasvinīm.
Anasūy" êti yā loke karmabhiḥ kyātim āgatā
tāṃ śīghram abhigaccha tvam abhigamyāṃ tapasvinīm.»
Sītā tv etad vacaḥ śrutvā Rāghavasya hit'|âiṣiṇī
tām Atri|patnīṃ dharmajñām abhicakrāma Maithilī.
Śithilāṃ valitāṃ vṛddhāṃ jarā|pāṇḍura|mūrdhajām
satataṃ vepamān'|âṅgīṃ pravāte kadalī yathā.
Tāṃ tu Sītā mahā|bhāgām Anasūyāṃ pati|vratām
abhyavādayad a|vyagrā svaṃ nāma samudāharat.
109.20 Abhivādya ca Vaidehī tāpasīṃ tām a|ninditām
baddh'|âñjali|puṭā hṛṣṭā paryapṛcchad an|āmayam.

Tataḥ Sītāṃ mahā|bhāgāṃ dṛṣṭvā tāṃ dharma|cāriṇīm
sāntvayanty abravīd dhṛṣṭā: «diṣṭyā dharmam avekṣase!
Tyaktvā jñāti|janaṃ Sīte mānam ṛddhiṃ ca mānini
avaruddhaṃ vane Rāmaṃ diṣṭyā tvam anugacchasi.
Nagarastho vanastho vā pāpo vā yadi vā śubhaḥ
yāsāṃ strīṇāṃ priyo bhartā tāsāṃ lokā mah"|ôdayāḥ.
Duḥśīlaḥ kāma|vṛtto vā dhanair vā parivarjitaḥ

been removed. It was she who, to advance the cause of the gods, straightway reduced ten nights to one. Here she is, blameless prince; look on her as a mother. Now have Vaidéhi approach her; she is a glorious woman worthy of every creature's adoration, an aged and ever amiable woman."

When the seer had finished speaking, Rághava replied with a word of assent and then addressed Sita, who was wise in the ways of righteousness: "Princess, you have heard 109.15
what the sage has said. Approach the ascetic woman at once, for your own good. Her name is Anasúya, and her deeds have won her renown throughout the world. Approach the ascetic at once—she is most approachable." Sita, princess of Míthila, who always had Rághava's welfare at heart, listened to his words and then sought out Atri's wife, a woman wise in the ways of righteousness. Anasúya was very old, her skin was wrinkled and loose, her hair white with age, and her body trembled constantly, like a plantain tree in the wind. Sita carefully did obeisance to the illustrious and faithful woman and announced her name to her. After doing 109.20
obeisance to the faultless ascetic, Vaidéhi cupped her hands in reverence and delightedly asked after her health.

She, too, felt delight when she saw how illustrious Sita was following the way of righteousness, and she cheered her, exclaiming, "How fortunate you have such high regard for righteousness! How fortunate you should abandon your kinfolk, your pride and wealth, proud Sita, to follow Rama when he was banished to the forest. A woman who holds her husband dear—whether he is in the city or the forest, whether he is good or evil—gains worlds that bring great blessings. To a woman of noble nature her husband

strīṇām ārya|svabhāvānāṃ paramaṃ daivataṃ patiḥ.
109.25 N' âto viśiṣṭaṃ paśyāmi bāndhavaṃ vimṛśanty aham
sarvatra yogyaṃ Vaidehi tapaḥ kṛtam iv' âvyayam.
Na tv evam avagacchanti guṇa|doṣam asat|striyaḥ
kāma|vaktavya|hṛdayā bhartṛ|nāthāś caranti yāḥ.
Prāpnuvanty ayaśaś c' âiva dharma|bhraṃśaṃ ca Maithili
akārya|vaśam āpannāḥ striyo yāḥ khalu tad|vidhāḥ.
Tvad|vidhās tu guṇair yuktā dṛṣṭa|loka|par'|âvarāḥ
striyaḥ svarge cariṣyanti yathā puṇyakṛtas tathā.»

110.1 SĀ TV EVAM uktā Vaidehī an|asūyān asūyayā
pratipūjya vaco mandaṃ pravaktum upacakrame:
«N' âitad āścaryam āryāyā yan māṃ tvam anubhāṣase
viditaṃ tu mam' âpy etad yathā nāryāḥ patir guruḥ.
Yady apy eṣa bhaved bhartā mam' ārye vṛtta|varjitaḥ
a|dvaidham upavartavyas tath" âpy eṣa mayā bhavet.
Kiṃ punar yo guṇa|ślāghyaḥ sānukrośo jit'|êndriyaḥ
sthir'|ânurāgo dharm'|ātmā mātṛvartī pitṛ|priyaḥ?
110.5 Yāṃ vṛttiṃ vartate Rāmaḥ Kausalyāyāṃ mahā|balaḥ
tām eva nṛpa|nārīṇām anyāsām api vartate.
Sakṛd dṛṣṭāsv api strīṣu nṛpeṇa nṛpa|vatsalaḥ
mātṛvad vartate vīro mānam utsṛjya dharmavit.

is the supreme deity, however bad his character, however licentious or indigent he might be. I can see no kinsman to 109.25
surpass him, Vaidéhi, far as I might look. Like ascetic power, which once acquired is never lost, a husband is ready and able, come what may. But bad women have no such understanding of virtue and vice. Their hearts are the slaves of desire, and they lord it over their husbands. Indeed, women like that, Máithili, who yield to what they should not do, are held up to infamy and fall away from righteousness. But women like you, virtuous women who can tell good from bad in this world, come to reside in heaven just the same as men who have gained great merit."

So Anasúya spoke, and Vaidéhi ungrudgingly paid her 110.1
homage and softly replied: "The instruction my noble lady has given me comes as no surprise. I myself am well aware that a husband is a woman's *guru*. Even if my husband were utterly lacking in good behavior, my noble lady, still I would always obey him wholeheartedly. How much more readily would I obey a man praised for his virtues, a compassionate, self-disciplined and righteous man, who is constant in his love, who defers to his mother and holds his father dear? Great Rama behaves toward all the women of the king ex- 110.5
actly as he does toward Kausálya. And any woman the king glanced at but once mighty Rama would treat just like a mother, without the least resentment. For he cherishes the king and knows the meaning of righteousness.

Āgacchantyāś ca vijanaṃ vanam evaṃ bhay'|āvaham
samāhitaṃ hi me śvaśrvā hṛdaye yat sthitaṃ mama.
Pāṇi|pradāna|kāle ca yat purā tv agni|saṃnidhau
anuśiṣṭā janany" âsmi vākyaṃ tad api me dhṛtam.
Navī|kṛtaṃ tu tat sarvaṃ vākyais te dharma|cāriṇi:
pati|śuśrūṣaṇān nāryās tapo n' ânyad vidhīyate.
Sāvitrī pati|śuśrūṣāṃ kṛtvā svarge mahīyate
tath"âiv'ârundhatī yātā pati|śuśrūṣayā divam.
Variṣṭhā sarva|nārīṇām eṣā ca divi devatā
Rohiṇī ca vinā candraṃ muhūrtam api dṛśyate.
Evaṃ|vidhāś ca pravarāḥ striyo bhartṛ|dṛḍha|vratāḥ
deva|loke mahīyante puṇyena svena karmaṇā.»

Tato 'nasūyā saṃhṛṣṭā śrutv" ôktaṃ Sītayā vacaḥ
śirasy āghrāya c' ôvāca Maithilīṃ harṣayanty uta:

«Niyamair vividhair āptaṃ tapo hi mahad asti me
tat saṃśritya balaṃ Sīte chandaye tvāṃ śuci|vrate.
Upapannaṃ ca yuktaṃ ca vacanaṃ tava Maithili
prītā c' âsmy. ucitaṃ kiṃ te karavāṇi? bravīhi me.»
«kṛtam ity» abravīt Sītā tapo|bala|samanvitām.
Sā tv evam uktā dharmajñā tayā prītatar" âbhavat.
«sa|phalaṃ ca praharṣaṃ te hanta Sīte karomy aham.
Idaṃ divyaṃ varaṃ mālyaṃ vastram ābharaṇāni ca
aṅga|rāgaṃ ca Vaidehi mah"|ârham anulepanam.
Mayā dattam idaṃ Sīte tava gātrāṇi śobhayet
anurūpam asaṃkliṣṭaṃ nityam eva bhaviṣyati.

The instructions my mother-in-law imparted to me as I was coming to this desolate and frightening forest have remained firmly implanted in my heart. And I have retained as well the lessons my mother taught me long ago, when I gave my hand before the marriage fire. But your words, follower of righteousness, have reminded me afresh of all this: no other ascetic act is required of a woman than obedience to her husband. Sávitri is exalted in heaven because she 110.10
showed obedience to her husband. Arúndhati, too, went up to the heavens by virtue of her obedience to her husband. And Róhini, the very best of women and a goddess up in the heavens, is never seen an instant separated from the moon. Excellent women such as these, firm in their vows to their husbands, are exalted in the world of the gods by reason of their meritorious deeds."

Anasúya was delighted to hear Sita's words. She kissed her on the forehead, and to Sita's delight she said:

"I possess great ascetic power, acquired through various austerities. I will now make use of it, chaste Sita, for your enjoyment. Your words are fitting and proper, Máithili, and 110.15
they have pleased me. What is the most suitable thing I might do for you? Only tell me." "You have already done it," Sita replied to the woman of ascetic power. These words pleased the righteous woman all the more. "Come now, Sita, I wish to repay the delight you have given me. Here is a choice heavenly garland, raiment and jewelry, and a cream, Vaidéhi, a precious salve. This that I give you, Sita, will beautify your body, it will suit you perfectly, never spoil, and be yours forever. With this heavenly cream applied to

Aṅga|rāgeṇa divyena lipt'|âṅgī Janak'|ātmaje
śobhayiṣyāmi bhartāraṃ yathā śrīr Viṣṇum avyayam.»
110.20 Sā vastram aṅga|rāgaṃ ca bhūṣaṇāni srajas tathā
Maithilī pratijagrāha prīti|dānam anuttamam.
Pratigṛhya ca tat Sītā prīti|dānaṃ yaśasvinī
śliṣṭ'|âñjali|puṭā dhīrā samupāsta tapo|dhanām.
Tathā Sītām upāsīnām Anasūyā dṛḍha|vratā
vacanaṃ praṣṭum ārebhe kathāṃ kāṃ cid anupriyām.
«Svayaṃ|vare kila prāptā tvam anena yaśasvinā
Rāghaveṇ' êti me Sīte kathā śrutim upāgatā.
Tāṃ kathāṃ śrotum icchāmi vistareṇa ca Maithili
yath"|ânubhūtaṃ kārtsnyena tan me tvaṃ vaktum arhasi.»
110.25 Evam uktā tu sā Sītā tāṃ tato dharma|cāriṇīm
«śrūyatām iti» c' ôktvā vai kathayām āsa tāṃ kathām.
«Mithil"|âdhipatir vīro Janako nāma dharmavit
kṣatra|dharmaṇy abhirato nyāyataḥ śāsti medinīm.
Tasya lāṅgala|hastasya karṣataḥ kṣetra|maṇḍalam
ahaṃ kil' ôtthitā bhittvā jagatīṃ nṛ|pateḥ sutā.
Sa māṃ dṛṣṭvā nara|patir muṣṭi|vikṣepa|tatparaḥ
pāṃśu|guṇṭhita|sarvāṅgīṃ vismito Janako 'bhavat.
An|apatyena ca snehād aṅkam āropya ca svayam
‹mam' êyaṃ tanay" êty› uktvā sneho mayi nipātitaḥ.
110.30 Antarikṣe ca vāg ukt" âpratimā mānuṣī kila:
‹evam etan nara|pate dharmeṇa tanayā tava.›
Tataḥ prahṛṣṭo dharm'|ātmā pitā me Mithil"|âdhipaḥ
avāpto vipulām ṛddhiṃ mām avāpya nar'|âdhipaḥ.

your body, daughter of Jánaka, you will adorn your husband to the same degree that Shri adorns the eternal Vishnu."

Máithili accepted the raiment, cream, jewelry and garlands, a gift of love without compare. After accepting the gift, glorious Sita cupped her hands in reverence and waited in steadfast attendance upon the ascetic. Now, as Sita was waiting on her, the pious Anasúya put a question to her about a certain tale she was fond of. "It was at a self-choice rite, they say, that glorious Rághava obtained you, Sita. This at least is the tale that has reached my ears. I should like to hear that tale in full, Máithili, exactly as it happened, in its entirety. Would you tell it to me, please?" So the righteous woman spoke, and replying, "You shall hear it then," Sita told the tale:

"There is a righteous and mighty king of Míthila; his name is Jánaka. He honors the code of *kshátriya* and rules his land with prudence. It was once when, plow in hand, he was tilling the circle of fields that I broke through the earth—so the story goes—and arose to become the daughter of the king. King Jánaka was busy sowing grain by the fistful when he caught sight of me, my body all caked with dirt, and he was amazed. He was childless then, you see, and with his own two hands he took me affectionately on his lap. 'She shall be my daughter,' he said, and he showered me with affection. From out of the sky, they say, there came a voice—a human voice but unlike any ever heard: 'It is so, lord of men. By rights the child is yours.' My father, the righteous lord of Míthila, was delighted. The lord of men had obtained vast wealth, he felt, in obtaining me.

Dattvā c' âsmīṣṭavad devyai jyeṣṭhāyai puṇya|karmaṇā
tayā saṃbhāvitā c' âsmi snigdhayā mātṛ|sauhṛdāt.
Pati|saṃyoga|sulabhaṃ vayo dṛṣṭvā tu me pitā
cintām abhyagamad dīno vitta|nāśād iv' âdhanaḥ.
Sadṛśāc c' âpakṛṣṭāc ca loke kanyā|pitā janāt
pradharṣaṇām avāpnoti Śakreṇ' âpi samo bhuvi.
Tāṃ dharṣaṇām a|dūrasthāṃ saṃdṛśy' ātmani pārthivaḥ
cinnt"|ârṇava|gataḥ pāraṃ n' āsasād' âplavo yatha.
A|yonijāṃ hi māṃ jñātvā n' âdhyagacchat sa cintayan
sadṛśaṃ c' ânurūpaṃ ca mahī|pālaḥ patiṃ mama.
Tasya buddhir iyaṃ jātā cintayānasya saṃtatam
‹svayaṃ|varaṃ tanūjāyāḥ kariṣyām' îti› dhīmataḥ.
Mahā|yajñe tadā tasya Varuṇena mah"|ātmanā
dattaṃ dhanur|varaṃ prītyā tūṇī c' âkṣayya|sāyakau.
A|saṃcālyaṃ manuṣyaiś ca yatnen' âpi ca gauravāt
tan na śaktā namayituṃ svapneṣv api nar'|âdhipāḥ.
Tad dhanuḥ sthāpya me pitrā vyāhṛtaṃ satya|vādinā
samavāye nar'|êndrāṇāṃ pūrvam āmantrya pārthivān:
‹idaṃ ca dhanur udyamya sajyaṃ yaḥ kurute naraḥ
tasya me duhitā bhāryā bhaviṣyati na saṃśayaḥ!›
Tac ca dṛṣṭvā dhanuḥ|śreṣṭhaṃ gauravād giri|saṃnibham
abhivādya nṛpā jagmur a|śaktās tasya tolane.
Sudīrghasya tu kālasya Rāghavo 'yaṃ mahā|dyutiḥ

The virtuous king entrusted me to the care of his favorite queen, the eldest, and she raised me affectionately, with a mother's love. Now, when my father observed that I had reached the right age for marriage, he began to worry, and he grew desolate, like a man impoverished by the loss of his wealth. The father of an unmarried girl, though he be the equal of Indra on earth, finds himself humiliated by people, by his equals, and even his inferiors. When the king 110.35
perceived how close he was coming to humiliation, he was launched upon a sea of worry, and like a man without a raft he could not make the shore. Seeing I was not born of a woman's womb, the protector of the land, for all his thinking, could not discover a fit and proper husband for me.

But after giving it much thought he had an idea. 'I will hold the self-choice rite for my daughter,' the wise king decided.

He had at that time a superb bow and pair of quivers with inexhaustible arrows. Great Váruna had graciously bestowed them on him at a great sacrifice. Because of its weight humans could not budge the bow, no matter how hard they tried; lords of men were unable to bend it even
in their dreams. So after he had extended invitations to the 110.40
kings and put the bow on display, my truthful father made this declaration before the convocation of the lords of men: 'The man who can raise this bow and string it shall have my daughter for his wife. Let no one doubt it!' The kings looked at the superior bow, like a mountain in weight, and they said farewell and departed, unable even to lift it. A long time passed until one day this splendid Rághava arrived with

Viśvāmitreṇa sahito yajñaṃ draṣṭuṃ samāgataḥ.
Lakṣmaṇena saha bhrātrā Rāmaḥ satya|parākramaḥ
Viśvāmitras tu dharm'|ātmā mama pitrā supūjitaḥ.
110.45 Provāca pitaraṃ tatra: ‹Rāghavau Rāma|Lakṣmaṇau
sutau Daśarathasy' êmau dhanur|darśana|kāṅkṣiṇau.›
ity uktas tena vipreṇa tad dhanuḥ samupānayat.

Nimeṣ'|ântara|mātreṇa tad ānamya sa vīryavān
jyāṃ samāropya jhaṭiti pūrayām āsa vīryavān.
Tena pūrayatā vegān madhye bhagnaṃ dvidhā dhanuḥ
tasya śabdo 'bhavad bhīmaḥ patitasy' âśaner iva.
Tato 'haṃ tatra Rāmāya pitrā saty'|âbhisaṃdhinā
udyatā dātum udyamya jala|bhājanam uttamam.
Dīyamānāṃ na tu tadā pratijagrāha Rāghavaḥ
avijñāya pituś chandam Ayodhy"|âdhipateḥ prabhoḥ.
110.50 Tataḥ śvaśuram āmantrya vṛddhaṃ Daśarathaṃ nṛpam
mama pitrā ahaṃ dattā Rāmāya viditātmane.
Mama c' âiv' ânujā sādhvī Ūrmilā priya|darśanā
bhāry"|ârthe Lakṣmaṇasy' âpi dattā pitrā mama svayam.
Evaṃ datt" âsmi Rāmāya tadā tasmin svayaṃ|vare
anuraktā ca dharmeṇa patiṃ vīryavatāṃ varam.»

111.1 Anasūyā tu dharmajñā śrutvā tāṃ mahatīṃ kathām
paryaṣvajata bāhubhyāṃ śirasy āghrāya Maithilīm.
«Vyakt'|âkṣara|padaṃ citraṃ bhāṣitaṃ madhuraṃ tvayā
yathā svayaṃvaraṃ vṛttaṃ tat sarvaṃ hi śrutaṃ mayā.
Rame 'haṃ kathayā te tu dṛṣḍhaṃ madhura|bhāṣiṇi

Vishva·mitra to observe a sacrifice. My father paid special homage to valiant Rama and his brother Lákshmana, and to righteous Vishva·mitra. 'Here are two Rághavas,' the sage told my father, 'Rama and Lákshmana, sons of Dasha·ratha. They are eager to see the bow.' Upon hearing this, my father had the bow brought out. 110.45

In the twinkling of an eye mighty Rama bent it, and all at once the mighty prince strung and drew it. And so impetuously did he draw the bow that it broke in two right in the middle, and the sound it made as it fell was dreadful, like a thunderclap. Thereupon my father, true to his agreement, raised up a splendid water vessel, ready to bestow me on Rama. But ready though my father was to bestow me, Rághava would not accept me right away, for he did not yet know the will of his father, the lordly king of Ayódhya. So my father invited my father-in-law, aged King Dasha·ratha, and afterward bestowed me on the celebrated Rama. And my younger sister, the good and lovely Úrmila, my father of his own accord bestowed as wife on Lákshmana. And that is how I was bestowed on Rama, there at the self-choice ceremony, and as is right I love my husband, the mightiest of men." 110.50

When righteous Anasúya had heard this extraordinary tale, she embraced Máithili with both arms and kissed her on the forehead. "How wonderfully and sweetly you spoke, each word, each syllable was clear, and now I have heard the whole story of how the self-choice rite took place. I am truly charmed by your tale, my sweet-voiced child. But now the majestic sun is setting, bringing on the gracious 111.1

ravir astaṃ gataḥ śrīmān upohya rajanīṃ śivām.
Divasaṃ prati kīrṇānām āhār'|ârthaṃ patatriṇām
saṃdhyā|kāle nilīnānāṃ nidr"|ârthaṃ śrūyate dhvaniḥ.
Ete c' âpy abhiṣek'|ārdrā munayaḥ kalaś'ôdyatāḥ
sahitā upavartante salil'|āpluta|valkalāḥ.
Ṛṣīṇām agni|hotreṣu huteṣu vidhi|purvakam
kapot'|âṅg'|âruṇo dhūmo dṛśyate pavan'|ôddhataḥ?
Alpa|parṇā hi taravo ghanī|bhūtāḥ samantataḥ
viprakṛṣṭe 'pi ye deśe na prakāśanti vai diśaḥ.
Rajanī rasa|sattvāni pracaranti samantataḥ
tapo|vana|mṛgā hy ete vedi|tīrtheṣu śerate.
Saṃpravṛttā niśā Sīte nakṣatra|samalaṃkṛtā
jyotsnā prāvaraṇaś candro dṛśyate 'bhyudito 'mbare.
Gamyatām anujānāmi Rāmasy' ânucarī bhava
kathayantyā hi madhuraṃ tvay" âhaṃ paritoṣitā.
Alaṃkuru ca tāvat tvaṃ pratyakṣaṃ mama Maithili!
prītiṃ janaya me vatsa divy'|âlaṃkāra|śobhinī.»
Sā tadā samalaṃkṛtya Sītā sura|sut'|ôpamā
praṇamya śirasā tasyai Rāmaṃ tv abhimukhī yayau.
Tathā tu bhūṣitāṃ Sītāṃ dadarśa vadatāṃ varaḥ
Rāghavaḥ prīti|dānena tapasvinyā jaharṣa ca.
Nyavedayat tataḥ sarvaṃ Sītā Rāmāya Maithilī
prīti|dānaṃ tapasvinyā vasan'|ābharaṇa|srajām.
Prahṛṣṭas tv abhavad Rāmo Lakṣmaṇaś ca mahā|rathaḥ
Maithilyāḥ sat|kriyāṃ dṛṣṭvā mānuṣeṣu sudurlabhām.
Tatas tāṃ sarvarīṃ prītaḥ puṇyāṃ śaśi|nibh'|ānanaḥ

night. You can hear the twitter of the birds that by day range far and wide in search of food; now at twilight they are going to their roosts to sleep. And here, carrying their water pots, are the sages returning in a group, wet from their ablutions, their bark-cloth garments soaked with water. The seers have made their fire offerings according to precept—do you see the smoke, pearly as a dove's neck, carried by the wind? Though their leaves are really sparse, the trees all about, even in the distance, seem to have grown dense; the horizons are all lost to view.

The creatures that wander by night are now beginning to move, and the deer of the ascetics' grove are settling down on the paths that lead to the altars. Night is coming, Sita, adorned with stars. You can see the moon in his mantle of light rising in the sky. You may go now and attend on Rama, I give you leave. Your sweet storytelling has brought me deep contentment. But first, would you adorn yourself, Máithili, in my presence? Allow me to have the pleasure of seeing you, my child, beautified by these heavenly ornaments." So Sita adorned herself, and looking like the daughter of the gods, she bowed her head to her and went off to Rama.

The eloquent Rághava took great delight in seeing Sita adorned with the ascetic's gift of love. And Sita, princess of Míthila, explained everything to Rama, how the ascetic had given her a gift of love—raiment, jewelry and garlands. Rama was delighted, and so was Lákshmana, the great chariot-warrior, to see the honor conferred on Máithili, an honor such as few mortals ever receive. And so, with the warm reception accorded him by the perfected ascetics, the moon-faced delight of the Raghus happily passed the holy night.

arcitas tāpasaiḥ siddhair uvāsa Raghu|nandanaḥ.
Tasyāṃ rātryāṃ vyatītāyām abhiṣicya hut'|âgnikān
āpṛcchetāṃ nara|vyāghrau tāpasān vana|gocarān.
Tāv ūcus te vana|carās tāpasā dharma|cāriṇaḥ
vanasya tasya saṃcāraṃ rākṣasaiḥ samabhiplutam.
«Eṣa panthā maha|ṛṣīṇāṃ phalāny āharatāṃ vane
anena tu vanaṃ durgaṃ gantuṃ Rāghava te kṣamam.»
III.20 It' îva taiḥ prāñjalibhis tapasvibhir
dvijaiḥ kṛta|svastyayanaḥ paraṃ|tapaḥ
vanaṃ sa|bhāryaḥ praviveśa Rāghavaḥ
sa|Lakṣmaṇaḥ sūrya iv' âbhra|maṇḍalam.

And when night was over, and the forest ascetics had bathed and made their fire offerings, the tigers among men asked leave of them. The forest ascetics, who followed the way of righteousness, informed them that travel through the forest was impeded by *rákshasa*s. "But there is one path through the forest," they said, "which the great seers use when they go to gather fruit. By this path, Rághava, one can pass safely through the otherwise impassable forest." Then the *brahman* ascetics cupped their hands in reverence and blessed the journey of the slayer of foes, and with his wife and Lákshmana, Rághava plunged into the forest, like the sun into a bank of storm clouds. III.20

GLOSSARY

AIKSHVÁKA "descendant of Ikshváku," patronymic used mainly of Dasha·ratha and Rama

ANASÚYA wife of the sage Atri, famous for her devotion and chastity

ÁPSARASES celestial maidens or nymphs known for their beauty

ASHVA·PATI father of Kaikéyi and maternal grandfather of Bhárata

ASHVINS twin deities of the Vedic pantheon renowned for their beauty

ÁSURAS class of demons, the brothers of the gods

BHARAD·VAJA a sage who renders hospitality to Rama and to Bhárata

BHÁRATA Dasha·ratha's second son, by Kaikéyi

BRAHMA creator divinity of the Hindu "trinity," regarded as the "Grandfather" of all living creatures

BRIHAS·PATI family priest of Indra

CHITRA·KUTA mountain where Rama, Sita and Lákshmana lived during their exile

DÁNAVAS class of demons descended from Danu

DÁNDAKA forest where Rama, Sita and Lákshmana spent the greater part of their exile

DASHA·RATHA Rama's father and king of Ayódhya

DASHARÁTHI "descendant of Dasha·ratha," patronymic used of Dasha·ratha's four sons, especially Rama

GANDHÁRVAS class of semi-divine beings known for their musical abilities; gandhárva women are noted for their beauty

GANGES a famous and holy river

GUHA king of the Nishádas and lord of Shringa·vera·pura; he was an ally of Rama and assisted him during his exile

IKSHVÁKU family name of the royal house of Ayódhya

INDRA king of the gods

JABÁLI a minister of King Dasha·ratha

JÁHNAVI epithet of the Ganges

Jánaka king of Míthila and father of Sita

Jánaki "daughter of Jánaka," patronymic used of Sita

Kákutstha "descendant of Kakútstha," patronymic used of princes of the Ikshváku dynasty, especially Rama and his brothers

Kaikéyi younger wife of Dasha·ratha and mother of Bhárata

Kailása mountain peak in the Himalayas

Kalíndi epithet of the Yámuna

Káshyapa son of Maríchi and father of gods and demons

Kausálya senior wife of Dasha·ratha and mother of Rama

Kékaya name of the father of Kaikéyi, and of the country of her birth in northwest India

Khara a brother of Rávana

kínnaras mythical creatures with the head of a horse and a human body; *kínnara* women are famed for their beauty

Kósala kingdom of the Ikshvákus

Kubéra god of wealth, son of Vishrávas and half brother of Rávana

Lákshmana son of Dasha·ratha and Sumítra, and Rama's constant companion

Máithili woman of Míthila, epithet of Sita

Mandákini river flowing near Mount Chitra·kuta in Rama's place of exile

Mánthara hunchbacked slave woman of Kaikéyi

Manu traditionally considered the father of the human race; the legendary founder of the Ikshváku dynasty

Maruts companions of Indra

Míthila Jánaka's capital city

Nandi·grama village where Bhárata lived during Rama's exile

Naráyana epithet of Vishnu

Nishádas forest-dwelling hunters and fishermen, ruled by Guha

Praja·pati "lord of creatures," epithet of Brahma

RÁGHAVA "descendant of Raghu," patronymic used especially of Rama and his brothers

RAGHU son of Kakútstha and ancestor of Rama; also used like "Rághava"

RAJA·GRIHA capital city of the Kékayas

RÁKSHASA class of violent and bloodthirsty demons, ruled by Rávana

RAMA eldest son of Dasha·ratha and Kausálya, and hero of the Ramáyana

RÁVANA main antagonist of the Ramáyana, the ten-headed overlord of the *rákshasas*

SÁGARA an Ikshváku king, ancestor of Rama

SÁRAYU river flowing on the outskirts of Ayódhya

SAUMÍTRI "son of Sumítra," patronymic used of Lákshmana

SHACHI'S LORD epithet of Indra, Shachi being Indra's wife

SHAKRA epithet of Indra

SHATRÚGHNA son of Dasha·ratha and Sumítra, and Bhárata's constant companion

SHRI goddess of royalty and consort of Vishnu

SHRINGA·VERA·PURA town on the Ganges, ruled by the Nisháda king, Guha

SITA daughter of Jánaka, wife of Rama, and heroine of the *Ramáyana*

SUMÁNTRA charioteer and adviser to king Dasha·ratha

SUMÍTRA youngest wife of Dasha·ratha and mother of Lákshmana and Shatrúghna

SUPÁRNA epithet of Gáruda, Vishnu's mount

TAMASA river near the Ganges

VAIDÉHI "woman of Vidéha," epithet of Sita

VAISHRÁVANA "son of Víshravas," patronymic used of Kubéra

VAIVÁSVATA "son of Vivasván," patronymic used of Yama

VAMA·DEVA a minister of king Dasha·ratha

VÁRUNA lord of the ocean

Vásava epithet of Indra

Vasíshtha Dasha·ratha's family preceptor

Vidéha country of Sita's birth

Vishnu one of the three main gods of the Hindu "trinity," along with Brahma and Shiva

Yama god of death

Yámuna a famous and holy river

Yudha·jit son of the king of the Kékayas, brother of Kaikéyi and maternal uncle of Bhárata

INDEX

Sanskrit words are given according to the accented CSL pronuncuation and aid in the English alphabetical order. They are followed by the conventional diacritics in brackets.

Abhikála *(Abhikāla)*, 357
absent, 35, 55, 369, 541
accepted way
  of regulating expenditure, 37
accompanying, 245, 463
act
  of kindness, 37
actors, 425
Áditi *(Aditi)*, 469
advanced
  in virtue, 37
  in wisdom, 37
  in years, 37
adviser, 39, 351, 427, 531, 616
affection, 35, 51, 67, 79, 89, 129, 137, 139, 165, 239, 261, 271, 451, 513, 603
afterworld, 147, 381
Agástya *(Agastya)*, 189, 257
Agni *(Agni)*, 287
Agni·varna *(Agnivarṇa)*, 563
agony
  deep, 241
Aikshváka *(Aikṣvāka)*, 97, 197, 203, 209, 259, 269
aim
  of their aged king, 43
Aja *(Aja)*, 563
Alámbusha *(Alambuṣā)*, 455, 461
Alárka *(Alarka)*, 99
All-Gods, 153
ally, 614
almond, 259, 441
aloe, 115, 397, 443, 467, 583
Ambarísha *(Ambarīṣa)*, 563
Amshumánt *(Aṃśumat)*, 563
Anaránya *(Anaraṇya)*, 561
Anasúya *(Anasūyā)*, 595, 597, 599, 601, 603, 607
ancestor, 41, 53, 393, 483, 511, 513, 517, 521, 537, 547, 551, 555, 557, 616, 646
Angáraka *(Aṅgāraka)*, 55
anger, 39, 51, 71, 83, 93, 119, 143, 167, 175, 223, 323, 543
ankólas *(aṅkolas)*, 481
ápsaras *(apsaras)*, 455, 457, 461, 463
archer, 45, 93, 425, 493, 513
arms
  four, 35
army, 39, 107, 109, 193, 203, 207, 219, 265, 273, 277, 355, 365, 367, 407, 411, 419, 421, 427, 429, 431, 433, 435, 445, 447, 449, 451, 455, 457, 459, 463, 467, 469, 471, 473, 477, 489, 491, 493, 495, 497, 499, 509, 563, 577, 579, 581, 585, 587
Arúndhati *(Arundhatī)*, 601
Áryaman *(Aryaman)*, 153
Asamáñja *(Asamañja)*, 205, 207, 563
ásanas *(asanas)*, 481
ascetic, 59, 93, 135, 183, 209, 211,

261, 329, 331, 335, 341, 377, 451, 455, 457, 461, 467, 475, 487, 499, 515, 529, 591, 593, 595, 597, 599, 601, 603, 609, 611
asceticism, 129, 229, 289, 401, 551, 555, 557, 591, 595
Ashóka *(Aśoka)*, 357
ashram, 287, 289, 291, 333, 335, 431, 449, 453, 455, 461, 465, 467, 497, 523, 527, 577, 591, 593, 595
ashva·karna *(aśvakarṇa)*, 501
Ashva·pati *(Aśvapati)*, 35, 83, 183, 363, 369, 381
Ashvin *(Aśvin)*, 79, 309
Ásita *(Asita)*, 561
aspects
  of political life, 37
assembly, 41, 49, 65, 67, 107, 297, 351, 353, 359, 373, 413, 415, 417, 503, 541, 565, 567
ásuras *(asuras)*, 39, 45, 81, 83, 121, 157, 265, 435, 547
Atri *(Atri)*, 595, 597
autumn, 49, 109, 239, 291, 341, 405, 475, 531
axes, 411
Ayódhya *(Ayodhyā)*, 61, 63, 65, 71, 135, 157, 201, 205, 219, 225, 235, 239, 245, 249, 261, 267, 271, 273, 275, 283, 285, 303, 313, 317, 343, 351, 367, 369, 401, 445, 451, 453, 463, 475, 487, 511, 517, 519, 533, 543, 545, 549, 551, 561, 567, 579, 581, 583, 585, 587, 607
Bahlíka *(Bāhlīka)*, 357
Bali *(Bali)*, 99
balsam, 397
bamboo, 293, 481
Bana *(Bana)*, 561
banished, 81, 83, 95, 253, 289, 399, 403, 407, 451, 597
banishment, 83, 133, 141, 215, 265, 273, 283, 309, 311, 313, 327, 381, 435, 471, 547
banner, 63, 65, 71, 109, 207, 235, 237, 287, 321, 385, 401, 411, 427, 463, 473, 497
banyan, 293
bark, 379, 389
  -cloth, 93, 121, 123, 141, 171, 209, 263, 277, 329, 375, 379, 485, 503, 519, 529, 533, 587, 609
bath, 63, 71, 123, 223, 251, 297, 337, 347, 365, 461, 465, 487, 521, 525, 565, 611
  -attendants, 425
bathed
  in tears, 249, 285, 307, 311
battle, 39, 45, 81, 83, 121, 219, 237, 265, 273, 339, 355, 391, 435, 491, 493, 495, 509, 547, 561, 581, 583
bauble-makers, 425
bazaar, 583
beams
  shining, 39
beauty, 614, 615
beings, 35, 293, 391, 487, 573, 614
benefit

of the entire world, 41
best
of seers, 595
Bhaga *(Bhaga)*, 153
Bhagi·ratha *(Bhagīratha)*, 563
Bhagi·rathi *(Bhāgīrathī)*, 279, 287, 437
Bharad·vaja *(Bharadvāja)*, 287, 289, 291, 431, 449, 451, 453, 455, 459, 461, 465, 467, 469, 471, 473, 499, 577, 579
Bhárata *(Bharata)*, 35, 55, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85, 87, 93, 119, 121, 123, 125, 129, 135, 141, 151, 163, 165, 183, 201, 203, 205, 207, 229, 239, 245, 253, 271, 275, 281, 283, 309, 321, 351, 353, 355, 357, 359, 361, 363, 365, 367, 369, 371, 375, 377, 379, 381, 389, 393, 395, 397, 399, 401, 403, 405, 407, 411, 413, 415, 417, 419, 425, 427, 429, 431, 433, 435, 439, 441, 447, 449, 451, 453, 455, 457, 459, 461, 463, 465, 467, 469, 471, 473, 475, 477, 483, 489, 491, 493, 495, 497, 499, 501, 503, 505, 509, 515, 517, 519, 521, 529, 531, 533, 535, 539, 545, 547, 549, 553, 557, 561, 565, 567, 569, 573, 575, 577, 579, 581, 583, 585, 587, 591, 595
Bhógavati *(Bhogavatī)*, 501
Bhrigu *(Bhṛgu)*, 561
bilva *(bilva)*, 457, 461, 481
bird, 61, 99, 195, 243, 245, 283, 287, 289, 295, 297, 299, 313, 333, 349, 357, 411, 451, 463, 473, 475, 481, 483, 487, 523, 535, 581, 609, 624
jet-black, 267
blanket-cleaners, 425
boat, 277, 279, 429, 447, 449
-men, 277
body, 35, 41, 95, 99, 131, 133, 173, 177, 211, 223, 237, 307, 329, 333, 337, 359, 383, 399, 403, 439, 451, 503, 537, 539, 543, 561, 597, 601, 603, 615
boons, 45, 75, 83, 91, 93, 95, 111, 163, 201, 211, 233, 239, 309, 401, 547, 561
two, 81, 83, 93, 121, 547
bowman
great-armed, 233
boyishness, 235
Brahma *(Brahma)*, 35, 155, 181, 189, 237, 279, 457, 461, 503, 539, 559
self-existent, 35
brahman *(brāhmaṇa)*, 37, 43, 47, 53, 65, 75, 99, 107, 109, 127, 137, 139, 153, 161, 173, 175, 181, 185, 189, 191, 193, 197, 229, 235, 241, 243, 279, 313, 333, 351, 353, 355, 363, 367, 375, 377, 399, 415, 421, 427, 445, 449, 461, 469, 505, 511, 513, 515, 549, 557, 567, 585, 611
-murder, 137
breaker

of fortresses, 41, 225, 481
Brihas·pati *(Bṛhaspati)*, 39, 63, 155, 161, 225, 505, 529
brother, 35, 55, 59, 67, 77, 79, 113, 123, 127, 135, 139, 141, 143, 145, 147, 149, 165, 167, 183, 189, 201, 217, 219, 221, 225, 235, 245, 247, 253, 263, 267, 269, 273, 277, 279, 283, 287, 289, 291, 293, 295, 297, 311, 315, 321, 355, 363, 373, 375, 377, 379, 381, 385, 389, 391, 393, 399, 401, 403, 405, 407, 415, 417, 419, 429, 433, 435, 439, 443, 445, 447, 451, 453, 467, 489, 491, 493, 495, 497, 499, 503, 505, 507, 511, 513, 515, 517, 519, 521, 523, 529, 531, 533, 535, 541, 543, 545, 547, 549, 567, 569, 573, 575, 585, 587, 591, 607, 615, 617
elder, 55, 391, 503, 529
eldest, 41, 139, 259, 277, 287, 315, 373, 407, 431, 515, 545
younger, 139
Budha *(Budha)*, 225
bull, 47, 221, 235, 321, 347, 349, 401, 471, 473, 489, 517, 581
among kings, 83
among kshátriya, 145
among men, 41, 49, 77, 95, 135, 139, 143, 151, 161, 167, 203, 239, 257, 279, 285, 321, 405, 407, 449, 455, 497, 513, 515, 547, 565
among mortals, 455
among the twice-born, 189
-elephants, 89, 437, 505, 523
of an elephant, 231
white, 107
bulls
four, 35
burden, 169, 171, 179, 205, 269, 329, 379, 383, 503, 555, 587
of righteousness, 41
calf, 133, 151, 379, 439
young, 235
camel, 365, 421, 463, 465
capital, 615, 616
care, 43, 141, 153, 161, 165, 211, 241, 247, 269, 283, 285, 341, 391, 399, 433, 569, 605
of son, 41
cave, 489
lion's, 501
mountain, 63, 171, 379, 523
without its lion, 585
celebration, 45, 353
cemetery, 231
ceremony
of purification, 399
Chaitra *(Caitra)*, 47
chamber, 53, 63, 83, 87, 89, 109, 111, 117, 125, 127, 129, 197, 199, 213, 221, 223, 225, 231, 305, 307, 309, 363, 369, 371, 403, 535
champion
of righteousness, 41
chanters
of the Sama Veda, 397
chariot, 45, 47, 49, 51, 61, 85, 107, 109, 113, 115, 121, 163, 167,

213, 215, 219, 223, 229, 235, 239, 241, 247, 249, 257, 259, 267, 271, 273, 275, 305, 307, 309, 311, 313, 315, 329, 341, 359, 365, 367, 369, 389, 391, 415, 419, 425, 427, 437, 469, 471, 489, 491, 495, 511, 523, 577, 581, 583, 585, 587, 609
chariot fighter, 47, 199, 259
master, 37
charioteer, 49, 53, 101, 103, 109, 111, 191, 197, 199, 203, 213, 219, 221, 223, 245, 247, 257, 259, 263, 267, 269, 273, 277, 303, 305, 307, 309, 313, 315, 317, 319, 367, 369, 419, 429, 475, 567, 579, 583, 585, 616
chastity, 614
cheerful, 37, 75, 219, 427, 471
birds, 61
child
-less, 131, 211, 235, 285, 385, 603
unborn, 375, 563
Chitra *(Citrā)*, 111
Chitra·kuta *(Citrakūṭa)*, 291, 293, 295, 297, 299, 453, 467, 469, 473, 481, 483, 485, 487, 489, 493, 495, 497, 499, 577, 591
Chitra·ratha *(Citraratha)*, 191, 365, 461
citron, 459
city, 35, 39, 45, 55, 61, 65, 67, 81, 115, 121, 123, 139, 141, 163, 195, 203, 219, 225, 229, 231, 233, 235, 241, 245, 247, 249, 265, 271, 273, 275, 285, 299, 303, 307, 313, 317, 323, 351, 353, 355, 357, 359, 361, 367, 369, 395, 397, 409, 411, 425, 445, 511, 515, 517, 529, 543, 551, 567, 569, 573, 581, 583, 597, 615, 616
native, 35
white-clay, 367
claims
of righteousness, 37, 495, 515
of statecraft, 515
clothes
of bark, 379, 389
clouds, 61, 63, 65, 99, 111, 113, 115, 147, 163, 183, 225, 229, 231, 239, 329, 353, 415, 425, 443, 457, 459, 471, 473, 475, 527, 583
autumn, 109
laden with rain, 39
rain-laden, 43
co-wife, 79, 135, 563
coach, 247, 267, 365, 579, 581
collecting, 37
combat, 39, 491
comfort, 75, 79, 131, 137, 149, 203, 221, 237, 263, 289, 307, 319, 351, 435, 445, 457, 495
companion, 615, 616
compassion, 39, 117, 195, 237, 267, 275, 293, 557
conch, 413
conduct, 37, 39, 133, 137, 165, 175, 195, 217, 239, 275, 309, 347, 375, 427, 511, 515, 517, 519, 553, 587, 591, 595
connoisseur

of the fine arts, 37
conqueror
of enemy fortresses, 41
consecrated, 39, 51, 55, 57, 81, 85, 93, 117, 121, 123, 145, 147, 161, 239, 271, 285, 377, 407, 415, 517, 531, 543, 563, 587
consecration, 55, 57, 59, 63, 65, 67, 77, 83, 89, 93, 103, 107, 109, 113, 115, 121, 127, 139, 141, 143, 145, 149, 163, 217, 377, 407, 491, 497, 505, 545, 547
consort, 616
constellation
auspicious, 411
control, 57, 79, 135, 145, 149, 183, 297, 397
self-, 37, 51, 271, 507, 511
couch, 71, 75, 179, 189, 199, 231, 233, 315, 371, 459, 465
gilt, 125
gold-worked, 371
golden, 111
lovely, 117
luxurious, 87
magnificent, 459
sumptuous, 81
counsel, 313
of the aged, 45
country, 617
courtyard, 61, 111, 117, 127, 191, 195, 231, 305, 351
cow, 51, 89, 133, 137, 151, 179, 191, 193, 221, 225, 235, 257, 279, 289, 339, 347, 355, 383, 391, 399, 439, 463, 471, 523, 581
all-beneficent, 383
-dung, 359
-eared, 523
-herd, 355
wish-granting, 385
wishing-, 465
cream
sandalwood, 149, 177
creator, 614
creature, 39, 67, 143, 149, 151, 155, 237, 243, 273, 311, 329, 403, 405, 537, 545, 557, 559, 563, 595, 597, 609, 614, 615
charming, 233
creeping, 171
evil, 209
evil-scheming, 383
forest, 295
foul, 593
living, 371
numberless, 433
of the sky, 193
vile, 503
water, 195
wicked, 593
crocodile, 259, 581
crossroads
empty, 369
cuckoo, 267, 291, 329, 523
curse, 125, 209, 257, 283, 333, 341, 393, 501, 503
dánavas *(dānavas)*, 237
Dándaka *(Daṇḍaka)*, 81, 93, 121, 123, 125, 129, 139, 163, 199, 283, 317, 375, 429, 463, 533, 549

darbha *(darbha)*, 55, 107, 503, 521, 525
Dárdura *(Dardura)*, 457
dark
  as the blue lotus, 45
Dasha·ratha *(Daśaratha)*, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 47, 49, 53, 59, 61, 67, 71, 73, 81, 83, 95, 97, 109, 117, 149, 163, 165, 193, 205, 207, 209, 217, 219, 223, 251, 253, 257, 263, 265, 269, 279, 283, 287, 305, 327, 335, 343, 361, 365, 395, 407, 413, 415, 417, 435, 439, 443, 445, 451, 471, 473, 501, 505, 523, 525, 527, 533, 541, 547, 551, 563, 565, 573, 579, 583, 607
Dasha·rathi *(Dāśarathi)*, 241, 263, 265, 293, 427, 429, 435, 443, 481
date-palm, 455, 465
daughter, 615, 616
dawn, 45, 65, 97, 249, 267, 291, 399, 407, 533
death, 91, 95, 121, 131, 135, 137, 143, 167, 175, 237, 253, 381, 483, 517, 537, 537, 541, 551, 617
  -less, 41, 51, 383, 415, 529
  of his father, 371
  of the king, 357
defender
  of the world, 231
  of this people, 251
deities, 614
delight
  of the Raghus, 35, 163, 295, 495, 609
Delighted, 35, 427
demons, 614–616
departure, 305, 591
descent
  noble, 37
desire, 35, 39, 41, 43, 51, 53, 59, 63, 89, 91, 113, 123, 169, 175, 183, 185, 201, 203, 205, 207, 241, 269, 281, 283, 291, 329, 361, 363, 431, 453, 461, 463, 467, 469, 483, 515, 531, 545, 559, 599
deva·daru *(devadāru)*, 397
devotee, 243
devotion, 185, 237, 243, 271, 275, 381, 614
dhánvanas *(dhanvanas)*, 481
Dhatri *(Dhātṛ)*, 153, 469
dhava *(dhava)*, 481
Dhruva·sandhi *(Dhruvasaṃdhi)*, 561
Dhundhu·mara *(Dhundhumāra)*, 339, 561
Dilípa *(Dilīpa)*, 339, 417, 563
distress
  deep, 375
divine, 43, 183, 185, 237, 443
divinity, 614
dolphin, 111, 259, 475
door-leaves, 369
drum
  bass, 41, 217, 443, 457, 523
dung, 359
dynasty, 149, 357, 375, 453, 489, 577, 615

Dyumat·sena *(Dyumatsena)*, 177
ear, 457, 603
earth, 39, 41, 51, 53, 67, 71, 73, 89, 91, 95, 99, 101, 103, 107, 109, 113, 117, 123, 137, 147, 155, 183, 201, 225, 235, 263, 265, 281, 307, 323, 329, 351, 353, 359, 377, 383, 395, 397, 399, 401, 407, 409, 433, 435, 443, 453, 455, 457, 473, 485, 491, 495, 497, 503, 517, 519, 521, 523, 525, 531, 539, 545, 559, 565, 567, 569, 581, 603, 605
Eka·sala *(Ekasālā)*, 367
Ela·dhana *(Eladhāna)*, 365
elder, 127, 173, 217, 241, 313, 331, 379, 391, 393, 397, 407, 433, 503, 529, 541
eldest, 41, 139, 259, 277, 287, 315, 373, 407, 431, 515, 545
elephant, 37, 45, 47, 79, 107, 115, 121, 127, 143, 145, 147, 149, 155, 163, 169, 179, 189, 205, 207, 219, 221, 225, 231, 233, 249, 267, 291, 295, 303, 307, 313, 319, 329, 335, 347, 363, 367, 375, 385, 389, 391, 415, 421, 425, 437, 439, 445, 449, 455, 459, 463, 465, 469, 471, 473, 483, 487, 489, 491, 493, 495, 499, 511, 513, 517, 521, 531, 535, 575, 579, 581, 583, 585, 595
  young, 113
eloquent
  of seers, 395
enemies, 39, 45, 55, 73, 75, 79, 95, 111, 121, 133, 147, 149, 185, 283, 285, 295, 313, 325, 353, 355, 363, 365, 371, 381, 385, 405, 437, 441, 443, 445, 451, 475, 477, 491, 493,501, 517, 519, 545, 581
  fortresses of, 41
equals
  of great Indra and Váruna, 35
essence
  of sandalwood, 403
esteem
  of people, 39
even-tempered, 37
excellent judge
  of men, 37
exile, 97, 141, 143, 145, 149, 195, 209, 213, 223, 233, 253, 289, 299, 309, 317, 321, 327, 343, 349, 357, 375, 377, 395, 427, 561, 583, 614, 615
expenditure, 37, 513
eye, 51, 57, 59, 63, 87, 89, 93, 95, 97, 99, 101, 113, 117, 123, 125, 127, 139, 143, 153, 155, 157, 161, 165, 169, 175, 179, 199, 205, 211, 213, 229, 231, 235, 239, 247, 249, 273, 295, 303, 309, 313, 315, 319, 321, 325, 331, 335, 341, 349, 367, 369, 371, 373, 377, 381, 383, 385, 401, 405, 409, 417, 433, 439, 445, 453, 457, 461, 465, 467, 471, 483, 485, 487, 489, 497,

503, 517, 519, 525, 527, 567, 575, 607
fair, 97, 181, 219, 267, 437, 485, 511, 547
fame, 43, 129, 149, 193, 237, 261, 319, 433, 453, 557, 565
family, 37, 59, 61, 63, 71, 73, 75, 79, 107, 137, 177, 253, 273, 313, 339, 353, 355, 357, 361, 363, 371, 395, 397, 401, 413, 415, 417, 425, 449, 451, 459, 507, 509, 529, 541, 565, 585, 614, 617
Fate, 249, 443
father, 35, 39, 45, 49, 53, 57, 59, 61, 77, 79, 93, 99, 111, 113, 117, 119, 121, 123, 125, 129, 137, 139, 141, 145, 149, 151, 163, 165, 167, 169, 173, 175, 177, 179, 181, 193, 197, 201, 203, 209, 211, 213, 215, 221, 237, 239, 245, 257, 259, 263, 265, 281, 283, 285, 289, 291, 303, 309, 311, 319, 321, 331, 333, 337, 349, 353, 359, 361, 363, 369, 371, 373, 375, 377, 381, 383, 385, 393, 395, 399, 401, 403, 407, 415, 427, 431, 437, 451, 469, 483, 493, 495, 497, 505, 517, 519, 521, 523, 525, 531, 533, 539, 541, 543, 545, 547, 549, 551, 555, 561, 563, 565, 567, 569, 573, 575, 577, 579, 585, 599, 603, 605, 607, 614, 615
favor, 37, 59, 89, 113, 163, 165, 353
feast, 303
feet, 49, 85, 95, 117, 125, 157, 167, 169, 201, 217, 239, 251, 263, 309, 317, 361, 371, 373, 401, 405, 441, 451, 453, 469, 497, 501, 503, 505, 527, 529, 531, 575, 577, 579, 587
  lovely, 369, 527
  of that ignoble woman, 125
festival, 63, 267, 353, 385, 437, 511
fig, 461
fighter, 37
fine arts, 37
fire, 73, 83, 93, 113, 121, 129, 175, 189, 211, 225, 229, 235, 273, 285, 287, 295, 397, 449, 465, 467, 475, 489, 493, 497, 499, 527, 593, 609, 611
  at a sacred rite, 529
  black-trailed, 499
  blazing, 63, 135, 349, 359, 401, 501
  -brand, 377
  flames of, 87, 149
  forest, 293, 433, 583
  image of, 503
  of grief, 303, 433
  raging, 149, 333, 491
  sacred, 45, 241, 337, 339, 389, 397, 407, 451, 507
  sacrificial, 581
  -sanctuary, 189, 397, 455
  tongues of, 483
  well-kindled, 297
firm
  of purpose, 43
fishermen, 425, 427, 429, 431, 447,

449, 615
flame, 147, 179, 293, 305, 327, 397, 433, 581
flood
  of misery, 71
  of people, 63, 113, 231, 409
  of swift horses, 473
flower, 63, 67, 107, 179, 193, 195, 235, 251, 257, 259, 295, 297, 311, 313, 327, 411, 443, 463, 469, 481, 483, 485, 487, 489, 497, 499, 503, 517, 521, 535, 557, 583
foot
  of a tree, 231, 247, 259, 307
forehead, 85, 155, 213, 217, 363, 369, 373, 505, 601, 607
foremost
  of seers, 467
forest, 47, 79, 81, 83, 85, 87, 89, 93, 95, 101, 121, 123, 125, 127, 129, 133, 135, 137, 139, 141, 147, 149, 153, 155, 157, 161, 163, 165, 167, 169, 171, 173, 175, 177, 179, 181, 183, 185, 191, 197, 199, 201, 203, 205, 209, 211, 213, 215, 217, 219, 221, 223, 231, 233, 235, 239, 241, 243, 245, 251, 257, 259, 261, 263, 267, 269, 271, 273, 275, 277, 279, 285, 287, 289, 291, 293, 295, 297, 303, 305, 307, 309, 311, 317, 319, 323, 325, 327, 329, 331, 333, 337, 339, 343, 349, 355, 365, 367, 375, 379, 381, 385, 389, 395, 399, 403, 407, 417, 419, 429, 431, 433, 435, 439, 445, 447, 449, 451, 455, 457, 459, 461, 465, 467, 469, 473, 475, 481, 483, 489, 495, 497, 499, 501, 505, 513, 517, 519, 523, 525, 527, 533, 545, 547, 557, 569, 583, 585, 593, 597, 601, 611, 614, 615
  trackless, 167, 169, 409, 417, 497
fortresses, 41, 225, 481
founder, 615
free
  from care, 43
fruit, 59, 129, 149, 169, 179, 183, 195, 203, 233, 235, 251, 261, 289, 291, 295, 313, 319, 327, 339, 349, 403, 411, 429, 441, 445, 451, 457, 459, 465, 483, 485, 487, 521, 535, 537, 557, 593, 595, 611
funeral, 229, 339, 361, 395, 397, 517, 519
gandhárva *(gandharva)*, 47, 91, 209, 455, 457, 461, 465, 573, 614
Ganges, 107, 259, 267, 277, 279, 287, 303, 357, 427, 429, 431, 447, 449, 579, 614, 616
garden, 195, 267, 367, 429, 437, 485
  blessed, 367
  city, 317
  lovely, 353
  seem to be weeping, 367
Gargya *(Gārgya)*, 191

garland, 63, 85, 87, 109, 155, 185, 193, 235, 359, 411, 457, 459, 461, 467, 485, 583, 601, 603, 609
garment, 83, 85, 191, 209, 211, 213, 279, 329, 337, 357, 389, 397, 401, 403, 437, 443, 445, 449, 459, 463, 483, 485, 519
  bark-cloth, 93, 121, 141, 209, 263, 375, 379, 503, 609
Gate of Victory, 369
gatekeeper, 369, 403
Gáutama *(Gautama)*, 351
Gaya *(Gayā)*, 547
geese, 169, 243, 257, 259, 485, 523
gems, 49, 83, 109, 189, 395, 413, 415, 461, 481
  cutters of, 425
  glistening, 581
  precious, 581
Ghritáchi *(Ghṛtācī)*, 455
gifts
  funerary, 399
ginger, 485
Giri·vraja *(Girivraja)*, 357
girl
  young, 317
glory, 43, 59, 139, 263, 385, 435, 531, 557, 573, 587
goat, 391, 399, 463
god, 39, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 63, 81, 83, 91, 95, 113, 121, 133, 145, 147, 153, 155, 157, 161, 165, 173, 189, 195, 219, 221, 235, 239, 265, 273, 297, 309, 341, 347, 351, 371, 383, 393, 435, 445, 455, 457, 461, 465, 481, 511, 513, 515, 517, 521, 525, 527, 533, 541, 547, 555, 557, 559, 597, 601, 609, 615, 617
  of death, 211
goddess, 616
gods, 614, 615, 617
  deathless, 41, 51, 383, 415, 529
  rest of, 155
gold, 49, 51, 83, 85, 113, 163, 183, 189, 213, 363, 397, 413, 443, 461, 465, 471, 501, 527, 575, 579, 587
golden, 87, 107, 109, 111, 189, 347, 369, 413, 501, 581
Gómati *(Gomatī)*, 257, 367
good
  of House, 517
Gopa *(Gopa)*, 461
grain, 107, 149, 195, 201, 235, 353, 389, 415, 513, 603
grandfather, 115, 117, 353, 363, 365, 369, 371, 547, 614
granter
  of boons, 45, 111, 211
  of Wishes, 357
Great Lord, 545
greeting, 189, 239, 271, 369, 415
grief, 73, 75, 77, 93, 97, 101, 119, 125, 131, 135, 137, 149, 153, 161, 179, 193, 199, 207, 211, 217, 225, 229, 233, 235, 239, 245, 249, 251, 269, 271, 283, 285, 303, 305, 307, 311, 315, 317, 319, 323, 325, 327, 337, 339, 343, 347, 349, 351, 353,

357, 371, 377, 379, 381, 383, 393, 395, 399, 401, 403, 409, 413, 417, 425, 433, 439, 469, 483, 517, 519, 527, 531, 539, 585, 595
Griha *(Gṛha)*, 365
grove, 251, 289, 293, 327, 401, 413, 591, 609
Guha *(Guha)*, 261, 263, 265, 267, 277, 303, 311, 429, 431, 433, 435, 439, 441, 447, 497, 505
guru *(guru)*, 37, 61, 63, 77, 121, 123, 137, 151, 165, 185, 331, 339, 391, 393, 407, 419, 431, 449, 453, 477, 495, 499, 501, 515, 529, 533, 541, 555, 557, 565, 569, 575, 577, 585, 587, 599
Haha *(Hāhā)*, 455
Háihayas *(Haihayas)*, 561
hair
  matted, 93, 121, 123, 141, 171, 277, 329, 445, 485, 501, 503, 529, 543, 587
hand, 47, 49, 53, 59, 65, 75, 77, 89, 97, 99, 101, 111, 113, 115, 129, 135, 137, 139, 143, 177, 179, 183, 189, 197, 199, 201, 209, 213, 215, 217, 219, 223, 229, 233, 239, 245, 247, 253, 259, 261, 263, 267, 279, 281, 287, 293, 309, 311, 317, 323, 325, 331, 335, 337, 341, 359, 373, 383, 389, 407, 417, 431, 435, 447, 455, 457, 467, 469, 475, 495, 511, 513, 527, 529, 531, 543, 557, 573, 579, 587, 591, 597, 601, 603, 611
  in a fire, 229
happiness, 41, 115, 155, 193, 215, 219, 239, 265, 297, 303, 343, 373, 435, 487, 503, 513, 515, 539
Hástina·pura *(Hastināpura)*, 357
Hasti·príshthaka *(Hastiprṣṭhaka)*, 367
head, 615
  -men, 425
heart, 39, 43, 47, 65, 73, 85, 89, 91, 93, 95, 97, 99, 101, 117, 119, 123, 131, 135, 139, 141, 145, 147, 151, 153, 161, 169, 171, 175, 191, 193, 203, 207, 211, 215, 217, 219, 221, 223, 235, 243, 245, 249, 253, 257, 267, 269, 273, 281, 297, 317, 319, 321, 325, 327, 333, 335, 337, 347, 361, 363, 367, 369, 383, 391, 395, 425, 439, 453, 469, 481, 493, 525, 527, 535, 539, 557, 567, 585, 597, 599, 601
  -sick, 369
heaven, 39, 91, 135, 155, 169, 177, 179, 181, 221, 285, 291, 319, 335, 341, 349, 351, 353, 381, 395, 401, 407, 413, 415, 445, 449, 457, 463, 471, 473, 475, 489, 517, 519, 523, 527, 531, 533, 539, 551, 553, 555, 557, 561, 573, 581, 585, 599, 601
heavenly, 117, 259, 339, 341, 353,

357, 457, 459, 461, 463, 467, 471, 539, 579, 601, 609
hell, 179, 381, 383, 417, 531, 547, 549, 555
helmsman, 277, 413, 445
hermit, 277, 337, 451
hero, 35, 147, 175, 241, 251, 339, 379, 581
Himálaya *(Himālaya)*, 433, 497, 575, 577
Himalayas, 561, 615
Hiránya·nabha *(Hiraṇyanābha)*, 389
home, 35, 51, 57, 59, 93, 123, 135, 165, 173, 179, 195, 201, 215, 229, 233, 243, 247, 249, 257, 261, 269, 271, 281, 289, 303, 317, 327, 341, 353, 357, 367, 375, 385, 391, 481, 485, 495, 551, 561
honest, 37, 77, 207, 213, 353, 365, 371, 509, 513, 553
horse, 37, 113, 115, 121, 123, 147, 149, 163, 213, 219, 223, 225, 231, 241, 245, 247, 257, 259, 261, 263, 267, 273, 275, 303, 311, 313, 353, 355, 357, 363, 365, 367, 369, 389, 391, 415, 419, 421, 425, 437, 445, 449, 455, 459, 463, 465, 469, 471, 473, 475, 489, 491, 493, 495, 511, 521, 579, 581, 583, 585, 595, 615
  splendid, 231
hospitality, 614
host
  of seers, 573, 593
hour
  of eclipse, 221, 229
house, 57, 61, 63, 91, 115, 123, 127, 129, 131, 157, 167, 169, 173, 189, 191, 211, 233, 249, 315, 317, 339, 351, 369, 405, 419, 467
  entire, 65
  four-room, 459
  grand, 399
  great, 163, 169
  majestic, 189
  private, 65
  stout-pillared, 537
  summer, 443
House, 67, 93, 165, 205, 217, 309, 313, 337, 349, 357, 377, 381, 407, 417, 425, 439, 443, 445, 451, 485, 517, 555, 563, 573, 577
Huhu *(Hūhū)*, 455
human, 615
hunchback, 71, 73, 75, 77, 81, 85, 87, 349, 403, 405, 407, 461, 615
hunters, 615
husband, 73, 81, 83, 91, 99, 113, 131, 143, 151, 153, 161, 163, 167, 169, 173, 175, 177, 179, 181, 197, 209, 213, 215, 235, 249, 251, 253, 311, 319, 323, 325, 347, 349, 351, 353, 381, 393, 419, 439, 445, 497, 519, 531, 597, 599, 601, 603, 605, 607
hymns, 99, 155, 243, 397, 543

Ikshváku *(Ikṣvāku)*, 41, 43, 59, 67, 107, 185, 229, 247, 257, 259, 269, 277, 309, 315, 353, 355, 365, 371, 401, 413, 417, 425, 463, 495, 505, 525, 559, 561, 563
illness, 373, 439
  physical, 119
implements
  sacrificial, 581, 593
incense-merchant, 425
Indra *(Indra)*, 35, 39, 41, 49, 63, 67, 91, 99, 113, 117, 147, 155, 189, 211, 225, 275, 321, 337, 365, 369, 383, 385, 401, 411, 415, 441, 481, 525, 529, 531, 533, 557, 605, 628
  god of thunderbolt, 147
  thousand-eyed, 113, 155
Indra·shira *(Indraśira)*, 363
injuries, 37
insightful, 37
instruments
  musical, 443
intimate, 45
Introduction, 5, 13
Irávata *(Irāvata)*, 363
Jabáli *(Jābāli)*, 351, 549, 553, 559, 577
jackfruit, 459, 481
Jáhnavi *(Jāhnavī)*, 267, 413, 595
Jambu·prastha *(Jambuprastha)*, 365
Jánaka *(Janaka)*, 177, 183, 209, 219, 287, 289, 349, 497, 519, 603
Jánaki *(Jānakī)*, 163, 311
Janárdana *(Janārdana)*, 57
Jana·sthana *(Janasthāna)*, 591
Jayánta *(Jayanta)*, 357
jewelry, 75, 85, 87, 107, 111, 199, 213, 319, 385, 403, 405, 443, 457, 461, 601, 603, 609
journey, 139, 153, 157, 317, 369, 373, 403, 425, 547, 611
joy, 35, 39, 45, 47, 59, 61, 63, 75, 95, 107, 127, 129, 131, 143, 151, 175, 185, 193, 195, 203, 215, 239, 249, 251, 273, 283, 319, 409, 417, 433, 453, 487, 541, 545, 585, 587
judge, 37, 53
juice
  of sugarcane, 455
jujube, 481, 521
Kaikéyi *(Kaikeyī)*, 35, 71, 73, 75, 77, 81, 85, 87, 91, 93, 95, 97, 99, 101, 113, 117, 119, 121, 123, 125, 131, 139, 141, 151, 163, 195, 201, 205, 207, 209, 211, 223, 229, 231, 233, 235, 239, 253, 257, 269, 271, 275, 281, 283, 307, 313, 349, 363, 369, 371, 375, 381, 389, 395, 401, 405, 413, 425, 427, 433, 453, 459, 469, 471, 491, 503, 505, 529, 531, 543, 547, 557, 569, 573
Kailása *(Kailāsa)*
  Mount, 49, 71, 109
Kakútstha *(Kākutstha)*, 59, 61, 151, 175, 189, 205, 219, 221, 239, 251, 263, 271, 289, 315, 417,

429, 431, 445, 447, 495, 517, 519, 529, 535, 551, 563, 565, 567, 573, 575, 587
Kalíndi *(Kālindī)*, 293, 561
Kalínga·nágara *(Kaliṅganagara)*, 367
Kalmásha·pada *(Kalmāṣapāda)*, 563
Kandu *(Kandu)*, 137
Kapívati *(Kapīvatī)*, 367
karni·kara *(karṇikāra)*, 469
kasha *(kāśa)*, 171, 177
Kashmiri, 481
Káshyapa *(Kāśyapa)*, 45, 49, 135, 351, 559
Katyáyana *(Kātyāyana)*, 351
Kausálya *(Kausalyā)*, 51, 57, 59, 73, 75, 77, 93, 113, 129, 133, 135, 137, 139, 149, 151, 153, 161, 165, 183, 189, 199, 211, 215, 217, 221, 223, 229, 231, 233, 237, 265, 271, 283, 285, 293, 305, 307, 309, 313, 315, 319, 323, 325, 327, 341, 347, 349, 351, 361, 371, 375, 377, 379, 381, 383, 385, 389, 393, 397, 399, 405, 425, 437, 439, 449, 451, 469, 471, 505, 525, 527, 575, 599
Káushika *(Kauśika)*, 189
Kékaya *(Kekaya)*, 35, 353, 363, 517
khádira *(khadira)*, 321
Khara *(Khara)*, 591, 593
kind-spoken, 37, 43, 221, 319
kindness, 37, 61, 167, 239, 241, 275, 475
king, 35, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 67, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85, 87, 89, 91, 93, 95, 97, 99, 101, 103, 107, 109, 111, 113, 115, 117, 119, 121, 123, 125, 127, 129, 133, 135, 137, 143, 145, 147, 149, 151, 153, 157, 163, 165, 183, 195, 197, 199, 201, 203, 205, 207, 209, 211, 213, 217, 221, 223, 229, 231, 239, 241, 253, 257, 261, 263, 265, 269, 271, 275, 277, 279, 281, 283, 305, 307, 309, 311, 313, 315, 319, 323, 325, 327, 337, 339, 343, 347, 349, 351, 353, 355, 357, 359, 361, 363, 367, 369, 371, 373, 375, 377, 379, 381, 383, 391, 393, 395, 397, 399, 401, 403, 407, 409, 413, 415, 417, 427, 435, 437, 439, 443, 447, 449, 451, 459, 461, 469, 471, 483, 485, 489, 497, 505, 507, 509, 513, 515, 517, 519, 521, 523, 525, 527, 533, 535, 541, 547, 549, 551, 555, 557, 561, 563, 563, 565, 569, 573, 585, 599, 603, 605, 607, 614–617
aged, 35, 97, 607
-dom, 45, 115, 125, 133, 183, 201, 203, 205, 207, 231, 253, 257, 261, 269, 275, 283, 321, 323, 353, 355, 379, 381, 389, 407, 429, 451, 481, 507, 529, 535, 543, 555, 565, 573, 579, 615

great, 35, 39, 45, 81, 83, 89, 93, 95, 119, 129, 223, 241, 269, 271, 279, 281, 307, 309, 311, 351, 353, 355, 363, 375, 383, 395, 521, 533, 535, 561
lifeless, 397
of elephants, 233
-ship, 59, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 117, 123, 127, 133, 139, 141, 147, 201, 203, 229, 237, 251, 265, 279, 283, 321, 323, 349, 371, 377, 379, 381, 389, 407, 413, 415, 417, 433, 437, 445, 451, 487, 491, 493, 497, 531, 533, 535, 547, 551, 553, 563, 567, 573, 585, 587
kínnara *(kiṃnara)*, 87, 475, 483
kínshuka *(kiṃśuka)*, 295
kinsmen, 45, 59, 195, 261, 263, 273, 277, 311, 323, 347, 373, 383, 427, 429, 435, 441, 447, 491, 497, 523, 539, 543, 545, 573, 579, 585, 599
knowledgeable, 37, 509
Kósala *(Kosala)*, 121, 257, 259, 283, 347, 485
kovidára *(kovidāra)*, 427, 491
kshátriya *(kṣatriya)*, 139, 145, 415, 421, 441, 511, 557, 603
Kubéra *(Kubera)*, 191, 457, 461, 485, 497
Kukshi *(Kukṣi)*, 561
Kulínga *(Kuliṅga)*, 357, 365
Kuru *(Kuru)*, 357, 457, 459, 485
kusha *(kuśa)*, 65, 167, 171, 177, 209, 261, 321, 501, 567
Kútika *(Kūṭika)*, 367
Lákshmana *(Lakṣmaṇa)*, 35, 41, 57, 59, 79, 113, 127, 129, 131, 133, 135, 137, 139, 141, 143, 149, 183, 185, 189, 191, 193, 195, 199, 201, 209, 217, 221, 223, 231, 233, 237, 239, 241, 245, 247, 251, 253, 259, 263, 265, 267, 271, 277, 281, 283, 285, 287, 293, 295, 297, 309, 311, 315, 317, 327, 353, 361, 363, 375, 379, 393, 395, 403, 405, 407, 417, 425, 429, 435, 439, 441, 445, 471, 475, 483, 485, 487, 489, 491, 493, 495, 497, 499, 503, 519, 521, 525, 527, 529, 545, 547, 549, 591, 595, 607, 609, 611
lament, 97, 133, 137, 179, 211, 217, 221, 229, 231, 233, 237, 253, 285, 307, 315, 333, 335, 349, 351, 371, 375, 389, 393, 395, 397, 399, 401, 405, 413, 417, 501, 503, 517, 535, 539, 587
land, 39, 43, 59, 79, 83, 85, 87, 109, 121, 127, 139, 149, 183, 199, 203, 211, 213, 225, 229, 233, 239, 253, 257, 259, 261, 265, 269, 283, 305, 313, 339, 353, 355, 411, 415, 437, 445, 455, 457, 459, 485, 511, 517, 525, 535, 543, 547, 561, 575, 603, 605
entire, 39, 203, 261
Lauhítya *(Lauhitya)*, 367
law

of time, 375
learned
in the sacred texts, 513
in the sciences, 37
libation, 341
funeral, 339, 397, 517, 519
life, 41, 45, 53, 59, 83, 89, 93, 95, 97, 99, 123, 125, 129, 133, 135, 137, 139, 149, 165, 169, 173, 175, 201, 203, 205, 211, 217, 219, 223, 229, 233, 237, 239, 243, 245, 257, 261, 263, 265, 269, 273, 279, 281, 283, 315, 317, 331, 335, 341, 343, 349, 351, 379, 393, 435, 439, 471, 493, 503, 509, 511, 527, 535, 537, 539, 543, 557, 563, 569
lion, 63, 79, 113, 131, 143, 155, 171, 235, 319, 321, 379, 395, 439, 447, 469, 489, 501, 503, 521, 523, 533, 585
flesh-eating, 321
liquor, 205, 467
date-palm, 455
lodhras *(lodhras)*, 481
Lohitánga *(Lohitāṅga)*, 225
lord, 51, 91, 93, 103, 109, 113, 149, 151, 161, 167, 175, 179, 191, 211, 221, 241, 303, 305, 307, 309, 325, 347, 385, 533, 547, 549, 581, 587, 599, 607, 615, 616
of all people, 501
of all the worlds, 155
of creatures, 559
of dánavas, 237
of earth, 39, 41, 67, 71, 73, 99, 101, 107, 113, 121, 123, 201, 323, 351, 407, 453, 517, 519, 539, 545, 569
of gods, 49
of kings, 253, 547
of Kósala, 257, 347, 485
of men, 41, 49, 51, 53, 59, 61, 63, 87, 93, 121, 123, 165, 197, 199, 201, 207, 213, 217, 229, 233, 305, 309, 313, 343, 351, 395, 397, 517, 549, 585, 603
of Míthila, 177, 603
of peoples, 321
of riches, 111
of rivers, 99, 117, 137, 201
of stars, the moon, 341
of the army, 469
of the country, 333
of the deathless gods, 383, 529
of the gods, 173, 383
of the hundred rites, 415
of the Ikshvákus, 413
of the land, 83, 183, 199, 211, 213, 225, 229, 233, 253, 265, 269, 305, 437, 525, 535
of the Nishádas, 261, 277, 429
of the people, 43, 67, 199, 319, 395
of the thirty gods, 189
of the wise gods, 533
of the world, 47, 89, 99, 151, 195, 199, 201, 207, 269, 351, 521, 555
of all, 199
lot, 233, 269, 551

lotus, 45, 47, 51, 59, 61, 71, 85, 89, 107, 161, 169, 179, 251, 295, 309, 313, 317, 321, 325, 341, 371, 439, 445, 465, 485, 487, 497, 503, 527, 555, 575
  blue, 45
lover, 353, 367, 485, 509
lust
  for kingship, 371
  for pleasure, 515
lute, 215, 457
machinery, 409
Madhu *(Madhu)*, 65
maidens, 107, 235, 614
  young, 347
Máithili *(Maithilī)*, 171, 175, 177, 181, 199, 203, 213, 271, 277, 309, 319, 445, 485, 599, 601, 603, 607, 609
Málaya *(Malaya)*, 457
Mályavati *(Malyavatī)*, 299
man, 245
  young, 327, 329, 439
Mandákini *(Mandākinī)*, 469, 473, 485, 487, 499, 519, 521, 523, 533, 577
Mándara *(Mandara)*, 309
Mandhátri *(Māndhātṛ)*, 561
mango, 327, 459, 481
Mánthara *(Mantharā)*, 71, 73, 75, 77, 81, 85, 87, 401, 405
Manu *(Manu)*, 257, 367, 559, 561
Maríca *(Mārīca)*, 45
Maríchi *(Marīci)*, 559
Markandéya *(Mārkaṇḍeya)*, 351
marriage fire, 99, 229, 601
Maru *(Maru)*, 563
Marut *(Marut)*, 47, 153, 545
master, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 71, 107, 109, 111, 115, 143, 149, 151, 161, 189, 235, 241, 251, 261, 275, 311, 347, 357, 391, 413, 427, 429, 463, 475, 497, 501, 503, 507, 509, 519, 535, 559
  of House, 165
  of the Vedas, 367
Mátali *(Mātali)*, 219
mattocks, 411
Maudgálya *(Maudgalya)*, 351
men, 37, 39, 41, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 59, 61, 63, 87, 93, 121, 123, 127, 135, 137, 147, 149, 161, 165, 197, 199, 201, 203, 207, 213, 217, 219, 221, 229, 233, 239, 263, 303, 305, 309, 313, 341, 343, 347, 351, 355, 367, 369, 373, 375, 395, 397, 407, 409, 411, 417, 421, 425, 449, 455, 461, 463, 465, 467, 475, 487, 491, 493, 497, 505, 507, 509, 511, 513, 517, 523, 533, 537, 539, 549, 551, 553, 555, 557, 565, 567, 579, 585, 599, 603
  best of, 35, 53, 117, 121, 123, 169, 195, 207, 237, 391, 409, 417, 495, 547, 549, 551, 561
  brave, 507
  chief, 39
  cunning, 551
  ears of the, 457
  eater of, 563, 591
  estimable, 363

evil, 557
good, 37, 181, 231, 335, 373, 415
government of, 543
great, 523
heroic, 145
holy, 339, 497
hostile, 511
ignoble, 417
leading , 529
Lords of, 165, 269, 605
luckless, 253
mightiest of, 607
of the city, 41, 43, 45
pleasing, 281, 319
prudent, 351
revealed, 367
sin, 391
sorrowing, 523
stronger, 411
thousand, 183
twice-born, 41, 185, 353, 549
vitals of, 149
who live in the forest, 231
who were wise, 37
wicked, 391
young, 111, 307, 519
merchant, 37, 65, 107, 109, 203, 249, 355, 425, 545, 583
Meru *(Meru)*
Mount, 49, 109, 221, 379
message, 53, 111, 275, 305, 373
milk-rice, 391
Milky Way, 411
minister, 51, 107, 207, 223, 261, 313, 351, 355, 363, 365, 399, 403, 409, 415, 427, 459, 467, 499, 507, 509, 513, 575, 614, 616
misery, 71
misfortune, 45, 55, 77, 95, 119, 285, 315, 379, 509, 511
Mishra·keshi *(Miśrakeśī)*, 455, 461
Míthila *(Mithilā)*, 177, 597, 603, 609
Mitra *(Mitra)*, 449
monkey, 155, 169, 289, 295, 403, 473, 481, 489, 523
moon, 41, 47, 49, 55, 63, 71, 85, 91, 97, 107, 111, 113, 117, 161, 215, 221, 225, 237, 285, 317, 341, 359, 395, 413, 415, 457, 485, 497, 505, 527, 531, 575, 583, 601, 609
autumn, 341
cool-rayed, 127
full, 107, 119, 239, 317, 409, 519, 563
full-, 67, 235, 317, 415
moorhen, 295, 523
mother, 35, 57, 59, 71, 73, 77, 79, 93, 119, 125, 127, 129, 133, 135, 137, 139, 141, 143, 151, 153, 157, 165, 167, 173, 179, 181, 201, 211, 213, 215, 217, 219, 221, 223, 231, 235, 239, 245, 249, 259, 265, 271, 275, 283, 285, 309, 315, 323, 331, 333, 335, 337, 339, 351, 361, 363, 369, 371, 373, 375, 377, 379, 381, 383, 393, 399, 405, 407, 417, 437, 439, 441, 453, 469, 471, 499, 505, 523, 527,

529, 531, 533, 535, 541, 545, 547, 549, 551, 565, 567, 573, 575, 577, 585, 595, 597, 599, 601, 605, 615, 616
motive, 37, 309
mountain, 39, 47, 63, 65, 111, 147, 163, 169, 171, 183, 195, 203, 225, 231, 251, 289, 291, 295, 297, 329, 359, 365, 367, 379, 433, 449, 453, 473, 475, 481, 483, 485, 487, 491, 495, 497, 499, 521, 523, 561, 577, 581, 605, 614, 615
musical instrument, 107, 321, 443, 583
musicians
  master, 115
myrobalan, 459, 461, 481
Nabhága *(Nābhāga)*, 563
Náhusha *(Nahuṣa)*, 61, 339, 417, 563
Nálini *(Nalinī)*, 485
Nándana *(Nandana)*, 357, 461, 465, 497
Nandi·grama *(Nandigrāma)*, 585, 587
Nandi·mukha *(Nandimukha)*, 413
Nárada *(Nārada)*, 155, 461
Naráyana *(Nārāyaṇa)*, 63
news
  good, 51, 75, 89, 109, 371, 375
night
  autumn, 531
nipas *(nipas)*, 481
Nishádas *(Niṣādas)*, 261, 277, 427, 429, 431, 441, 447
noble, 37, 39, 41, 43, 99, 101, 183, 185, 191, 211, 213, 215, 237, 271, 341, 343, 361, 373, 409, 415, 417, 419, 425, 445, 447, 453, 499, 503, 505, 511, 513, 529, 531, 539, 549, 567, 569, 585, 593, 597, 599, 614
nymphs, 614
ocean, 61, 67, 77, 99, 107, 117, 119, 137, 147, 197, 201, 235, 279, 315, 325, 349, 355, 359, 473, 475, 497, 503, 563, 575, 616
offering, 67, 189, 261, 287, 289, 297, 337, 397, 451, 453, 521, 533, 547, 555
  funeral, 229
  fire, 225, 467, 609, 611
office, 129, 271, 407, 489
  of prince regent, 41
outsider, 45
oxen, 99, 191, 365, 379, 383, 463, 523
pádmaka *(padmaka)*, 397
palace, 47, 53, 63, 111, 117, 193, 217, 221, 265, 267, 305, 313, 347, 369, 405, 437, 443, 459
palanquin, 191, 397, 471
palmyra, 461
Pañchála *(Pañcāla)*, 357
parasol, 113, 161, 193, 243, 459, 465, 549
  white, 41, 107
parrot, 443
Párvata *(Parvata)*, 461
path, 41, 115, 137, 155, 161, 177,

181, 215, 247, 259, 275, 279, 287, 295, 319, 333, 475, 485, 499, 557, 565, 609, 611
peacock, 43, 257, 267, 293, 295, 329, 425, 465, 475
peak, 615
pebble, 415
people, 39, 43, 45, 47, 51, 57, 61, 63, 65, 67, 71, 87, 89, 93, 95, 99, 109, 111, 113, 115, 117, 127, 141, 143, 145, 161, 177, 193, 195, 199, 201, 205, 207, 209, 211, 215, 217, 219, 221, 223, 225, 231, 235, 239, 247, 249, 251, 257, 263, 265, 267, 271, 273, 285, 289, 303, 313, 319, 321, 323, 331, 347, 351, 357, 369, 371, 379, 395, 397, 407, 409, 413, 415, 433, 435, 437, 449, 467, 471, 475, 499, 501, 511, 513, 523, 529, 533, 539, 545, 555, 575, 581, 583, 587, 605
  of the city, 35, 45, 115, 163, 225, 241, 323, 515, 543, 567, 569, 573
  young, 233
perfumers, 425
Philosophy, 26
physicians, 425
pine, 397, 461
pipe, 65, 267, 413, 437
places, 39, 205, 213, 287, 409, 411, 465, 485, 551
  different, 39
plasterers, 425
pleasure, 37, 41, 45, 53, 59, 79, 117, 133, 167, 169, 171, 177, 179, 183, 203, 207, 233, 251, 259, 263, 273, 445, 449, 455, 463, 483, 485, 501, 515, 535, 539, 551, 609
  garden, 429
  personal, 37
plowman, 383
pole-banner, 399
political life, 37
pool, 107, 465, 511
  filled with gems and shells and pebbles, 415
  of cow dung, 359
  placid, 231
potters, 425
power, 35, 41, 43, 71, 75, 77, 79, 81, 85, 87, 89, 91, 117, 131, 135, 137, 143, 145, 147, 149, 165, 169, 173, 177, 183, 185, 193, 237, 253, 257, 261, 269, 281, 285, 291, 321, 331, 335, 339, 351, 377, 379, 403, 405, 417, 437, 443, 457, 461, 467, 471, 487, 489, 491, 497, 505, 509, 535, 561, 575, 593, 595, 599, 601
  royal, 41
practice, 37
Praja·pati *(Prajāpati)*, 199, 529
Prasénajit *(Prasenajit)*, 561
Prashúshruka *(Praśuśruka)*, 563
Prayága *(Prayāga)*, 287, 291, 449, 461
prayer, 65, 113, 153, 155, 297, 397, 409, 533

precept, 377, 425, 503, 525, 553, 567, 609
preceptor, 57, 183, 189, 395, 505, 507, 617
preeminence
  in the sum total of the sciences, 37
priest, 57, 189, 391, 397, 449, 543, 545, 614
  family, 59, 61, 63, 107, 353, 357, 361, 363, 395, 397, 401, 413, 415, 417, 425, 449, 451, 459, 507, 529, 565, 585
  sacrificial, 395, 509
Primal Being, 57, 59
prince, 39, 45, 49, 61, 63, 71, 83, 101, 113, 117, 119, 161, 169, 191, 193, 203, 213, 219, 223, 225, 235, 237, 239, 247, 257, 261, 263, 267, 269, 277, 279, 281, 289, 291, 303, 305, 307, 309, 311, 327, 351, 353, 355, 361, 363, 365, 373, 375, 385, 393, 395, 399, 407, 409, 417, 419, 425, 431, 435, 437, 451, 453, 467, 471, 475, 495, 497, 505, 513, 519, 521, 523, 551, 553, 567, 569, 573, 577, 585, 597, 607, 615
  -regent, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 55, 57, 61, 67, 71, 73, 75, 77, 81, 93, 109, 113, 129, 161, 163, 241, 271, 3ɑp right and truthful, 121
Prithu *(Pṛthu)*, 561
príyaka *(priyaka)*, 367
priyálas *(priyālas)*, 481
proficient
  in the use of all the weapons of the gods, 43
  in training, 37
proprieties
  social, 37
protection
  of an army, 365
  of Ikshváku, 41
  of the best of royal seers, 367
protector
  of the earth, 53, 377, 395, 397, 399, 521
provinces, 39, 41, 43, 45, 67, 163, 509, 515, 543, 567, 569, 573
Punar·vasu *(Punarvasu)*, 55
Pundaríka *(Puṇḍarīkā)*, 461
purification, 399
Pushan *(Pūṣan)*, 153
Pushya *(Puṣya)*, 41, 51, 55, 57, 71, 75, 107, 161, 163
putra *(putra)*, 547
pyre, 397, 399
  funeral, 361
queen, 73, 77, 81, 87, 93, 95, 113, 129, 135, 153, 157, 219, 225, 229, 233, 271, 273, 275, 281, 283, 315, 317, 319, 325, 403, 469, 471, 505, 525, 557, 561, 605
Rághava *(Rāghava)*, 45, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 65, 67, 71, 73, 77, 79, 83, 85, 87, 89, 93, 103, 107, 109, 111, 113, 115, 117, 121, 123, 129, 131, 133, 135, 149, 157, 161, 167, 169, 173,

175, 177, 189, 193, 195, 197, 199, 201, 203, 209, 211, 217, 219, 223, 231, 233, 235, 237, 243, 245, 247, 249, 251, 253, 257, 259, 261, 263, 267, 269, 273, 285, 289, 291, 297, 303, 307, 309, 311, 315, 317, 319, 321, 333, 337, 341, 343, 349, 357, 359, 363, 369, 389, 399, 405, 407, 417, 419, 425, 431, 433, 435, 441, 445, 447, 451, 453, 469, 475, 489, 491, 495, 499, 501, 503, 507, 511, 513, 515, 517, 519, 521, 525, 529, 533, 541, 545, 549, 563, 565, 567, 569, 573, 575, 577, 579, 585, 587, 593, 595, 597, 603, 605, 607, 609, 611

Raghu *(Raghu)*, 35, 163, 185, 295, 489, 495, 563, 609

Rahu *(Rāhu)*, 55, 581

rain, 39, 47, 131, 183, 189, 193, 239, 243, 325, 329, 353, 401, 425, 473, 501, 511, 535, 573, 579, 583

Raja·griha *(Rājagṛha)*, 79, 353, 355, 357, 361, 365

rákshasa *(rākṣasa)*, 91, 233, 591, 593, 611

Rama *(Rāma)*, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 65, 67, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, 91, 93, 95, 101, 103, 107, 109, 111, 113, 115, 117, 119, 121, 123, 125, 127, 129, 131, 133, 135, 137, 139, 143, 145, 147, 149, 151, 153, 155, 161, 167, 169, 173, 175, 177, 179, 183, 185, 189, 191, 193, 195, 197, 199, 201, 205, 207, 209, 211, 215, 217, 219, 221, 223, 225, 229, 231, 233, 237, 239, 241, 245, 247, 249, 251, 253, 257, 259, 261, 263, 265, 267, 269, 271, 275, 277, 279, 281, 285, 287, 289, 291, 293, 295, 297, 299, 303, 305, 307, 309, 311, 313, 315, 317, 319, 321, 323, 325, 327, 341, 349, 353, 357, 361, 363, 373, 375, 377, 379, 381, 383, 385, 389, 391, 395, 401, 403, 405, 407, 409, 415, 417, 419, 425, 427, 429, 431, 433, 435, 437, 439, 441, 443, 445, 447, 453, 459, 463, 469, 471, 475, 477, 485, 489, 491, 493, 495, 497, 499, 501, 503, 505, 515, 517, 519, 521, 523, 525, 527, 529, 531, 533, 535, 539, 545, 549, 553, 559, 563, 565, 567, 569, 573, 575, 577, 579, 583, 585, 587, 591, 593, 595, 597, 599, 607, 609

mighty, 35, 247, 275, 599, 607

righteous, 35, 101, 137, 147, 195, 267, 303, 381, 395, 405, 549

tireless, 35, 151, 373, 395, 431

Rama Jamad·agnya *(Rāma Jāmadagnya)*, 137

Rávana *(Rāvaṇa)*, 573, 591

realm, 37, 207, 257, 261, 311, 513,

557
recitations, 265, 543
refuge, 167, 177, 217, 223, 251, 373, 383, 399, 403, 405, 591
regions
  trackless, 409
relationship, 229
Rénuka *(Reṇukā)*, 137
respect, 41, 99, 129, 131, 137, 143, 151, 153, 165, 213, 239, 271, 503, 539
respite, 41
retentive, 37
revenue, 37, 513
rice, 319, 321, 359, 399, 459, 461, 463, 465
rich, 191, 253, 363, 371, 417, 537
riches, 111
riding
  elephants, 37
  horses, 37
righteousness, 37, 41, 43, 57, 73, 91, 99, 101, 125, 129, 137, 139, 145, 151, 153, 161, 163, 165, 169, 181, 193, 197, 201, 209, 215, 217, 221, 229, 237, 241, 243, 247, 261, 263, 265, 281, 283, 285, 289, 291, 309, 319, 321, 323, 337, 339, 349, 361, 363, 373, 379, 381, 393, 395, 413, 415, 417, 433, 435, 449, 451, 483, 485, 495, 503, 505, 513, 515, 517, 529, 533, 539, 541, 543, 549, 551, 553, 555, 557, 565, 567, 569, 573, 577, 579, 595, 597, 599, 601, 611
rites, 57, 93, 141, 143, 161, 243, 265, 351, 353, 399, 403, 437, 515, 517, 539, 541, 551, 557, 603, 605, 607
  funeral, 395
  half-month, 233
  last, 373, 377
  the hundred, 415
ritual precept, 63, 377, 397, 507
river, 71, 99, 107, 117, 131, 137, 171, 201, 203, 205, 257, 259, 267, 277, 279, 289, 293, 295, 303, 317, 325, 329, 333, 335, 343, 355, 357, 365, 367, 427, 429, 447, 455, 459, 461, 465, 473, 487, 489, 517, 521, 579, 581, 614–617
road, 409
Róhini *(Rohiṇī)*, 581, 601
root, 83, 129, 149, 169, 179, 183, 195, 203, 233, 243, 261, 289, 291, 339, 411, 429, 445, 485, 487, 555, 557, 591, 593, 595
royal, 41, 81, 113, 117, 129, 147, 157, 259, 367, 369, 483, 549, 567, 573, 614
  highway, 61, 63, 67, 109, 115, 161, 193, 225, 235, 305
royalty, 616
sacred, 45, 241, 339, 389, 397, 451, 507, 513
  rite, 529
sacrifice, 53, 135, 183, 205, 217, 243, 279, 297, 303, 321, 353, 373, 391, 407, 503, 505, 517, 539, 547, 555, 563, 605, 607

sacrificer, 233, 367, 397, 581
sadhyas *(sadhyas)*, 153
Ságara *(Sagara)*, 137, 205, 207, 339, 563
sage, 61, 129, 155, 165, 193, 209, 211, 287, 289, 291, 293, 335, 337, 339, 341, 355, 385, 401, 453, 457, 469, 487, 541, 559, 561, 577, 579, 587, 595, 597, 607, 609, 614
sala *(sāla)*, 367, 489, 495, 497, 501
Sama Veda *(Sāmaveda)*, 397
sandalwood, 71, 111, 149, 177, 193, 397, 403, 411, 443, 463, 465, 467, 503
sandalwood cream
  precious, 111, 503
  red, 193, 463
sandalwood ointment
  white, 465
Sárayu *(Sarayū)*, 207, 259, 329, 331, 333, 335, 397, 487
Sarva·tirtha *(Sarvatīrtha)*, 367
satisfying
  the claims of righteousness, 37
  the gods and ancestors, 557
Satyaványt *(Satyavat)*, 177
Saudása *(Saudāsa)*, 563
Saumítri *(Saumitri)*, 45, 59, 79, 139, 141, 143, 183, 185, 189, 191, 217, 241, 245, 247, 261, 263, 267, 279, 281, 283, 287, 289, 293, 295, 297, 377, 441, 489, 491, 493, 525, 527, 549, 595
Sávitri *(Sāvitrī)*, 177, 601
sawyers, 425
scholars, 59
science, 37, 507
  of weapons, 37
scythes, 411
seat, 41, 53, 277, 289, 293, 415, 451, 459, 529
  golden, 369
seers, 47, 53, 61, 119, 125, 137, 155, 205, 259, 277, 291, 293, 295, 329, 395, 399, 449, 451, 455, 459, 465, 467, 471, 485, 499, 555, 561, 573, 579, 591, 593, 595, 597, 609, 643
  great, 153, 157, 289, 319, 557, 573, 611
  royal, 81, 129, 147, 259, 367, 483, 549, 567, 573
  supreme, 573
self-choice, 603, 605, 607
self-composure, 175
self-denial, 59, 133
self-discipline, 41, 43, 55, 135, 167, 169, 599
self-existent, 35, 181, 559
self-mortification, 487
self-possession, 127, 139, 185, 535
self-respecting, 181, 277
self-restraint, 77, 133, 137, 237, 317, 353, 485, 487, 519
selfishness, 229
serpent, 139, 157, 231, 233, 415, 501, 555
servant, 45, 71, 149, 253, 261, 275, 347, 351, 365, 391, 403, 463, 467, 509, 535

sesame-rice, 391
Seven Seers, 155
Shachi *(Śacī)*, 385, 481
  lord of, 39
shade
  of the white parasol, 41
Shaibya *(Śaibya)*, 99, 339
Shakra *(Śakra)*, 39, 43, 63, 81, 109, 173, 399, 457, 551
Shálmali *(Śalmali)*, 357
Shámbara *(Śambara)*, 81
Shánkhana *(Śaṅkhaṇa)*, 563
Shasha·bindu *(Śaśabindu)*, 561
Shatádru *(Śatadru)*, 365
Shatrúghna *(Śatrughna)*, 35, 119, 165, 265, 285, 353, 355, 363, 365, 389, 399, 401, 403, 405, 407, 413, 433, 437, 439, 445, 447, 449, 471, 473, 475, 495, 499, 505, 517, 549, 577, 585
Shatruñ·jaya *(Śatruñjaya)*, 189, 495
sheldrake, 259, 487, 523
shell, 415, 642
Shíghraga *(Śīghraga)*, 563
Shínshapa *(śiṅśapā)*, 461
Shiva *(Śiva)*, 157
shop, 65, 231, 305, 583
shraddha *(śraddhā)*, 399, 551
Shri *(Śrī)*, 293, 409, 603
  of the Lotus, 409
Shringa·vera·pura *(Śṛṅgaverapura)*, 259, 579
shudra *(śūdra)*, 333, 421
Shukra *(Śukra)*, 343, 505
Shuras *(Śūras)*, 561
Shyama *(Śyāma)*, 293
Siddhártha *(Siddhārtha)*, 207, 357
silver, 107, 397, 443
silvery, 61, 459, 481
singing, 65, 109, 161, 321, 443, 583
Sita *(Sītā)*, 57, 59, 61, 111, 113, 123, 125, 157, 161, 163, 169, 171, 173, 177, 181, 189, 193, 199, 209, 213, 215, 217, 219, 223, 235, 241, 245, 251, 263, 265, 267, 271, 277, 279, 281, 283, 285, 287, 293, 295, 297, 307, 311, 315, 317, 319, 349, 375, 377, 435, 437, 439, 441, 443, 485, 487, 489, 491, 501, 503, 519, 527, 547, 591, 595, 597, 601, 603, 609
Skanda *(Skanda)*, 153
skilled
  in battle, 509
  in counsel, 313
  in machinery, 409
  in the science, 507
skin, 107, 233, 547, 597
sky
  autumn, 49
slave, 149, 191, 233, 373, 399, 463, 531, 599, 615
slayer
  of enemies, 39, 55, 111, 121, 185, 285, 295, 353, 363, 371, 405, 437, 441, 443, 451, 517, 519
slipper, 575, 577, 579, 587
snake, 73, 117, 143, 155, 171, 195, 233, 259, 307, 329, 385, 471

Soma *(Soma)*, 153
son, 35, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 57, 59, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, 93, 95, 97, 99, 101, 113, 117, 129, 131, 133, 135, 137, 141, 145, 147, 149, 151, 153, 155, 165, 167, 177, 185, 195, 197, 199, 201, 207, 211, 213, 215, 217, 219, 221, 223, 225, 229, 231, 233, 235, 237, 239, 249, 251, 253, 265, 271, 273, 275, 279, 281, 283, 285, 287, 289, 305, 307, 309, 313, 315, 319, 321, 323, 325, 327, 335, 337, 339, 341, 353, 359, 361, 363, 365, 371, 375, 377, 379, 381, 383, 385, 389, 393, 395, 399, 401, 405, 415, 417, 427, 433, 435, 439, 443, 451, 453, 459, 463, 469, 471, 473, 489, 491, 493, 501, 503, 517, 525, 527, 529, 531, 541, 543, 547, 549, 559, 561, 563, 565, 573, 575, 577, 579, 583, 591, 593, 595, 607, 614, 615, 617
  artless, 371
  beloved, 343
  birth of a, 561
  by Kaikéyi, 35
  dear, 49, 55, 59, 155
  eldest, 41, 47, 77, 101, 205, 383, 407, 417, 563
  godlike, 371
  heroic, 437
  honest, 371
  long-absent, 369
  mighty, 53, 153, 237, 379
  of savage woman, 389
  righteous, 229, 237, 579
  splendid, 385
  younger, 563
sorrow, 45, 73, 75, 77, 89, 93, 97, 127, 129, 131, 133, 135, 141, 143, 147, 149, 161, 173, 175, 179, 181, 183, 191, 195, 199, 201, 203, 211, 215, 217, 219, 221, 223, 225, 229, 231, 233, 239, 249, 251, 263, 265, 267, 269, 271, 281, 283, 285, 299, 303, 311, 315, 317, 323, 327, 335, 341, 343, 349, 351, 353, 369, 373, 377, 381, 383, 385, 389, 393, 395, 399, 403, 405, 433, 437, 453, 491, 503, 505, 517, 519, 523, 525, 527, 535, 541, 545, 551, 577, 579, 585, 587, 593
  deep, 125, 151, 389, 395, 399, 521
sorrowing, 371
sound, 61, 199, 215, 251, 327, 329, 335, 389, 449, 457, 521, 523, 553, 607
  agreeable, 319
  deafening, 583
  deep, pervasive, 583
  deep sweet, 65
  heavenly, 457
  like that of the sea, 67
  like the roll of bass drums, 523
  loud, 367, 521
  of a pitcher being filled in the water, 335
  of footsteps, 335

of peacocks, 267
of pipes, 65, 267, 413, 437
of singing and musical instruments, 321, 443
of the bass drums, 457
of the target alone, 323, 327
of their crying, 347
of water dashing against water, 287
pitiful, 101
rich, 583
smooth deep, 581
sweet, 295
tumultuous, 367, 521, 523
with graceful rhythm, 457
source
of joy, 39, 63, 283
speech, 41, 51, 75, 207, 335, 339, 355, 409, 413, 565
spiteful, 39, 43, 75, 283
splendor, 39, 213, 229, 575
royal, 113, 117, 157, 369
square, 65, 67, 115, 231, 265, 351, 437
star, 63, 87, 225, 341, 351, 413, 481, 609
statecraft, 37, 43, 281, 283, 507, 515, 517
Sthánumati *(Sthānumatī)*, 367
storm cloud, 41, 113, 217, 473, 523, 611
stratagem, 379
stream, 169, 251, 303, 351, 411, 465, 469, 483, 539
mountain, 231
street, 193, 233, 351, 369
student, 45, 451
study, 269, 339
subjects' welfare, 41
Sudámana *(Sudāmana)*, 357
Sudárshana *(Sudarśana)*, 563
Sudhanván *(Sudhanvan)*, 507
Sudhárma *(Sudharma)*, 297, 413
sugarcane, 455, 463
Sumántra *(Sumantra)*, 47, 49, 53, 101, 103, 109, 111, 197, 199, 203, 213, 219, 223, 245, 247, 259, 269, 271, 275, 277, 279, 281, 303, 305, 309, 401, 419, 429, 477, 499, 505, 519, 567
Sumítra *(Sumitrā)*, 57, 59, 93, 127, 183, 217, 237, 271, 279, 283, 285, 293, 305, 347, 361, 377, 381, 389, 425, 449, 469, 489, 505, 525
sun, 39, 49, 55, 63, 91, 95, 97, 107, 111, 119, 135, 177, 181, 183, 197, 213, 219, 221, 225, 229, 231, 237, 243, 245, 267, 281, 287, 293, 325, 327, 329, 349, 351, 367, 383, 391, 401, 425, 433, 437, 471, 487, 501, 505, 527, 535, 537, 549, 575, 583, 607, 611
blazing, holy, 235
Supárna *(Suparṇa)*, 155, 231
Súrabhi *(Surabhī)*, 383, 463
Surya-várchasa *(Sūryavarcasa)*, 461
Susándhi *(Susaṃdhi)*, 561
Súvrata *(Suvrata)*, 563
Suyájña *(Suyajña)*, 185, 189
swastika, 447

sway, 39, 79, 179, 337
Syándika *(Syandikā)*, 257
tailors, 425
Taittiríya *(Taittirīya)*, 189
Tala·janghas *(Tālajaṅghas)*, 561
Támasa *(Tamasā)*, 243, 245, 247
tambourine, 217
target, 323, 327
Tarkshya *(Tarkṣya)*, 535
tears
  of gladness, 239
  of grief, 249
  of joy, 409, 417
  of joy and sorrow, 215
  of sorrow, 239
Tejo·bhibhávana *(Tejobhibhavana)*, 357
temple, 231
test, 43, 509
texts
  sacred, 321, 337, 391, 397, 513, 515
the people
  ears of, 457
thoroughfare, 63, 65, 67, 115, 117, 231, 265, 411, 437, 513, 583
thought, 39, 97, 117, 131, 225, 231, 233, 303, 335, 383, 393, 417, 419, 427, 433, 439, 463, 495, 507, 557, 605
thousand-eyed lord, 41
thunderbolt, 147, 337
tiger, 197, 523, 531
  among kings, 521, 573
  among men, 45, 91, 131, 169, 191, 209, 221, 223, 231, 233, 235, 245, 257, 261, 269, 277, 279, 291, 297, 321, 363, 367, 379, 389, 401, 407, 443, 453, 467, 469, 471, 475, 491, 501, 517, 521, 527, 547, 567, 575, 579
  of the Raghus, 185
time, 39
  long, 67, 373, 451, 473, 481, 505, 605
Timi·dhvaja *(Timidhvaja)*, 81, 237
tínishas *(tiniśas)*, 481
Tórana *(Toraṇa)*, 365
townsmen, 51, 67, 103, 207, 247, 249, 251, 253, 273, 487, 595
track, 229, 249
training, 37, 575
tree, 65, 195, 203, 231, 243, 247, 251, 259, 263, 281, 287, 293, 295, 297, 307, 311, 317, 327, 333, 359, 367, 409, 411, 413, 427, 433, 451, 455, 457, 459, 461, 465, 473, 475, 481, 489, 491, 535, 609
  almond, 259, 441
  banyan, 277, 293
  blossoming, 485
  butter, 481
  fig, 461
  flowering, 469, 517
  fruitful, 481
  ginger, 485
  great, 287, 535
  jujube, 521
  jujubes and myrobalan, 481
  lantern-, 67

lofty majestic, 491
lovely, 259
pines and palmyra, 461
prominent, 65
plantain, 129, 597
sala, 367, 489, 495, 497, 501
shínshapa and myrobalan, 461
soapnut, 481
thorn, 171, 177
venerable, 357
woodland, 549
Tri·jata *(Trijaṭā)*, 191, 193
trinity, 614, 617
Tri·shanku *(Triśaṅku)*, 225, 561
triumph, 233
true nature
of righteousness, 37
truth, 43, 45, 99, 135, 137, 141, 181, 197, 201, 203, 223, 237, 239, 263, 273, 325, 339, 381, 415, 419, 431, 547, 549, 555, 557, 565
truthful, 37, 77, 121, 141, 197, 201, 203, 239, 273, 291, 341, 373, 419, 441, 529, 547, 553, 555, 561, 605
Túmburu *(Tumburu)*, 457, 461
Tvashtri *(Tvaṣṭṛ)*, 455
twice-born, 41, 173, 185, 189, 191, 243, 321, 353, 355, 549
twin, 614
Ujjihána *(Ujjihāna)*, 367
umbrella, 243
uncle, 35, 123, 189, 355, 361, 363, 365, 371, 617
union, 41, 175, 523, 537
unspiteful, 43
upright, 37, 121, 133, 269, 507, 579
Úrmila *(Urmilā)*, 607
Uttánaka *(Uttānaka)*, 367
Vaidéha *(Vaideha)*, 177
Vaidéhi *(Vaidehī)*, 57, 61, 65, 129, 161, 167, 175, 183, 193, 213, 221, 231, 237, 239, 245, 257, 269, 279, 287, 289, 295, 307, 315, 317, 319, 349, 375, 445, 481, 483, 487, 495, 497, 517, 521, 527, 549, 591, 595, 597, 599, 601
Vaijayánta *(Vaijayanta)*, 81
Váishravana *(Vaiśravaṇa)*, 111, 115
vaishya *(vaiśya)*, 333, 421, 511
Vaivásvata *(Vaivasvata)*, 339, 341
Vaja·peya *(Vājapeya)*, 243
valets, 425
Valmíki *(Vālmīki)*, 3
valor
invincible, 39
value, 233, 321, 471
Vama·deva *(Vāmadeva)*, 47, 351, 577
Vámana *(Vāmanā)*, 461
Váruna *(Varuṇa)*, 35, 183, 605, 628
Varútha *(Varūtha)*, 365
Vásava *(Vāsava)*, 47, 219, 327, 545
Vasíshtha *(Vasiṣṭha)*, 47, 59, 61, 63, 185, 353, 355, 357, 377, 395, 401, 413, 415, 451, 473, 499, 523, 529, 543, 559, 565,

577, 579, 585
Vasv·aukasára *(Vasvaukasārā)*, 485
Veda, 99, 107, 127, 153, 161, 189, 243, 367, 413, 427, 555
Veda·shruti *(Vedaśruti)*, 257
Vedic, 614
  hymns, 243, 543
  recitation, 543
  recitations, 265
  scholars, 59
  study, 269, 339
  verses, 61, 129, 155
verses, 61, 129, 155
Vidéha *(Videha)*, 349, 443, 485, 527
Vidhátri *(Vidhātṛi)*, 153
vidya·dhara *(vidyādhara)*, 483
Víjaya *(Vijaya)*, 357
Vikúkshi *(Vikukṣi)*, 561
village, 45, 183, 257, 303, 317, 365, 425, 549, 615
Vínata *(Vinatā)*, 155, 367
vintners, 425
Vipásha *(Vipāśa)*, 357
viper, 73
  fork-tongued, 233
  poisonous, 93
virtue, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 49, 51, 59, 77, 93, 109, 125, 161, 165, 195, 197, 213, 235, 241, 245, 379, 399, 531, 539, 541, 543, 561, 595, 599, 601
Vishákha *(Viśākha)*, 225
Vishnu *(Viṣṇu)*, 65, 129, 357, 603
Vishváchi *(Viśvācī)*, 455
Vishva·karman *(Viśvakarman)*, 455, 457
Vishva·mitra *(Viśvāmitra)*, 607
Vishva·vasu *(Viśvavasu)*, 455
Vivasván *(Vivasvan)*, 559
voice
  loud, 41
Vritra *(Vṛtra)*, 155
washermen, 425
watchmen, 231
ways
  of righteousness, 43
wealth, 103, 123, 149, 185, 191, 193, 195, 197, 201, 205, 207, 249, 263, 353, 375, 377, 389, 415, 435, 551, 557, 597, 603, 605, 615
weapon, 37, 43, 81, 149, 193, 219, 237, 391, 449, 475, 491, 513
  -smiths, 425
  -practice, 37
weavers, 425
weeping, 125, 135, 221, 249, 307, 311, 349, 351, 367, 397, 399, 413, 439, 505, 521, 527, 539
welfare, 45, 87, 119, 129, 157, 171, 217, 239, 289, 309, 311, 363, 373, 495, 579, 587, 597
  of all creatures, 595
  of the world, 419
  of their House, 451
well-being, 41, 43, 119, 451, 483
widow, 231, 265, 395, 435, 531
wielder
  of the bolt, 383
  of the thunderbolt, 337
wife, 49, 55, 59, 63, 87, 89, 111,

113, 165, 167, 175, 177, 181, 189, 193, 205, 209, 215, 229, 233, 235, 239, 245, 253, 259, 263, 269, 277, 279, 283, 287, 291, 293, 323, 325, 327, 333, 337, 339, 341, 349, 353, 375, 377, 391, 439, 451, 481, 483, 485, 487, 519, 527, 581, 593, 595, 597, 605, 607, 611, 614–616
young, 89
wild goose, 85, 161, 243, 257, 575
wilderness, 89, 93, 121, 123, 129, 141, 145, 151, 177, 181, 195, 199, 201, 207, 219, 237, 251, 273, 283, 317, 329, 347, 353, 355, 365, 367, 375, 381, 385, 401, 407, 419, 429, 445, 505, 517, 533, 543, 549
will
of time, 39
wind
autumn, 475
wisdom, 37, 85, 235, 241, 539, 541, 543, 565, 575
of righteousness, 43
wise, 37, 39, 43, 61, 67, 109, 123, 137, 155, 169, 173, 197, 247, 257, 263, 279, 289, 291, 313, 325, 361, 363, 371, 373, 381, 383, 391, 395, 401, 415, 417, 431, 443, 453, 471, 493, 495, 505, 507, 509, 511, 513, 515, 529, 533, 539, 551, 553, 557, 569, 573, 575, 577, 595, 597, 605
wives, 45, 131, 183, 195, 197, 199, 211, 217, 221, 223, 225, 243, 249, 251, 253, 305, 349, 351, 397, 419, 449, 463, 469, 523, 525, 527, 537, 561
co-, 151
woman, 245, 615, 616
cruel, 383
evil, 97, 99, 229, 257, 379
good, 177, 215, 385
malicious, 205, 381, 403
wicked, 93, 253, 349, 381
young, 309
women, 614, 615
old and young, 45, 127
woodapple, 459, 465
words, 43, 47, 49, 53, 57, 59, 67, 71, 73, 75, 81, 87, 91, 93, 95, 101, 119, 121, 123, 125, 129, 131, 135, 141, 151, 163, 179, 183, 189, 193, 201, 207, 211, 215, 217, 237, 239, 245, 249, 257, 267, 281, 285, 289, 297, 309, 311, 315, 319, 323, 325, 331, 337, 339, 341, 355, 361, 363, 365, 371, 373, 375, 377, 379, 391, 395, 403, 405, 409, 417, 419, 427, 429, 431, 439, 441, 453, 457, 469, 471, 475, 493, 505, 513, 515, 517, 521, 527, 531, 533, 535, 539, 541, 547, 549, 553, 555, 557, 567, 573, 577, 579, 585, 597, 601, 607
rest of, 307
world, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 79, 89, 95, 99, 119, 125, 127, 133,

137, 145, 151, 153, 155, 167, 175, 195, 197, 199, 201, 207, 213, 217, 223, 225, 229, 231, 235, 237, 251, 259, 263, 269, 273, 279, 285, 311, 317, 319, 323, 325, 329, 339, 351, 355, 365, 375, 381, 385, 393, 417, 419, 425, 433, 435, 443, 445, 469, 501, 503, 513, 517, 519, 521, 525, 533, 537, 539, 541, 543, 551, 553, 555, 557, 559, 563, 565, 575, 595, 597, 599, 601
worship, 45, 51, 63, 65, 129, 155, 157, 165, 189, 245, 257, 263, 281, 337, 393, 441, 487
yak-tail, 107, 111, 459
Yama *(Yama)*, 39, 131, 211, 315, 317, 339, 521
  god of death, 211
Yámuna *(Yamunā)*, 107, 287, 293, 365, 579, 615
Yayáti *(Yayāti)*, 61, 95, 399
year, 37, 41, 43, 77, 83, 93, 121, 123, 125, 129, 131, 145, 147, 151, 153, 163, 169, 179, 201, 209, 213, 215, 219, 241, 271, 275, 279, 283, 285, 325, 353, 407, 451, 483, 533, 547, 569, 577, 591, 595
young, 45, 89, 111, 113, 127, 139, 143, 191, 219, 233, 235, 275, 289, 307, 309, 315, 317, 321, 327, 329, 347, 389, 401, 403, 405, 417, 429, 439, 451, 515, 519, 563, 575, 583, 591, 607, 615, 616
Yudhájit *(Yudhājit)*, 35, 365, 371
Yuvanáshva *(Yuvanāśva)*, 561
Shatrúghna
  sorrowing, 403